

JEMF QUARTERLY

JOHN EDWARDS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



VOL. XI, PART 1

SPRING 1975

No. 37

THE JEMF

The John Edwards Memorial Foundation is an archive and research center located in the Folklore and Mythology Center of the University of California at Los Angeles. It is chartered as an educational non-profit corporation, supported by gifts and contributions.

The purpose of the JEMF is to further the serious study and public recognition of those forms of American folk music disseminated by commercial media such as print, sound recordings, films, radio, and television. These forms include the music referred to as *cowboy, western, country & western, old time, hillbilly, bluegrass, mountain, country, cajun, sacred, gospel, race, blues, rhythm and blues, soul, and folk rock.*

The Foundation works toward this goal by:

gathering and cataloguing phonograph records, sheet music, song books, photographs, biographical and discographical information, and scholarly works, as well as related artifacts;

compiling, publishing, and distributing bibliographical, biographical, discographical, and historical data;

reprinting, with permission, pertinent articles originally appearing in books and journals;

and reissuing historically significant out-of-print sound recordings.

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LETTERS

Sir:

A few comments on the Fiddlin' John Carson discography in the latest *JEMFQ* (#36, pp 144-156). Regarding the first session: I have two different 78s of OK 4890, with different master pairings. In addition to the normal 8374b/8375a pairing, I have a record with 8374c/8375b. The recordings are quite different, enough so that it could easily be from a different session, though I guess this was probably not the case. I don't have the record handy (it's still up in New York packed away with most of my collection), but as I recall it had on the label "Recorded in Atlanta," which I'm not sure is on all (or any?) copies of the usual pressing....

I like the Analytic Index idea, but was kind of surprised to see how much is not known about so many of the tunes and songs. In this regard, I just came across the title, "Swinging On de Golden Gate" in an old songbook of Williams Colored Singers. I don't have the Carson record to play, but it is definitely the same song, with the chorus,

Den wake me, shake me, don't let me
sleep too late,
For I am a gwine away in de morning, to
swing on de golden gate.

The credits are "Words & Music by Fred Lyons, author of 'I Must Go' and 'Great Day In de Morning.'" There is no date on the song or the book, though my guess would be the booklet dates from around 1911 or so.

Dave Freeman
Floyd, Va.

Sir:

....My copy of Fiddlin' John Carson's OK 4890 has different master numbers than those you mention in the article and discography. Master #8374c is on "The Little Old Log Cabin In the Lane" side and master #8375b is on "The Old Hen Cacked and the Rooster's Going To Crow" side. The label on each side of the record bears the statement, "Recorded in Atlanta, Ga." It would therefore appear that more than one take of each song was issued under record #4890.

John L. Hauser
Wheaton, Md.

Sir:

I was delighted with your material on John Carson in the last *Quarterly*. I have been an admirer of old John from years ago when I thought I might be the only living person who liked to hear him. People would say their father or grandfather liked him; but only in recent times have I found other living devotees, and I am glad you are one....

I can add a couple of points of information to the Analytic Index. "It Takes a Little Rain With the Sunshine to Make the World Go Round" is a 1913 song by Ballard MacDonald and Harry Carroll. More interesting is the fact that "Meet Her When the Sun Goes Down" appears in the book of which I am sending a xerox of the title page and the page on which it appears [*Kerr's Collection of Merry Melodies*, Glasgow.] I think you will agree that the first strain is similar to John's. If there is any similarity in second strains, I don't see it. There is no date on this book, much less on materials in it. Most of the "eleven popular negro melodies" are Stephen Foster, which would at least suggest this might be of about the same vintage. If this was a negro melody, presumably the words John used about golden hair and rosy cheeks came later. (Some versions of "Shady Grove" have similar words.)

Gene Wiggins
North Georgia College,
Dahlgonega, Ga.

[Editor's note: We are pleased to have readers Freeman and Hauser clear up the question whether Carson's first two selections were indeed re-recorded at a later date. In all probability, these were the New York recordings referred to in the article preceding the discography. The fact that the labels still read "recorded in Atlanta" may simply have been due to failure to have new label copy printed up. The question of the existence of discs without a release number is still unanswered, however; we would welcome correspondence from any reader who has such an unnumbered Okeh release. We also urge readers with further information about any of the songs to forward it to the *JEMF*.]

LAKE HOWARD: THE SINGING FARMER

by Ruth Howard Hughes

[Editor's note: Last year, the JEMF received a letter from Mrs Ruth H. Hughes asking if we had any records by her father, Lake Howard, who had recorded a few dozen numbers in 1934-35 for the American Record Corp. She was interested, she wrote, in gathering all of her father's recordings. We agreed to tape for her what we had available in return for a biography on her father. The following story is the result of this mutually agreeable obligation. It has been edited minimally, so as not to delete the warmth of Mrs. Hughes' very personal portrait of her father.]

A year ago, Howard Wight Marshall, Director of Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville, Tennessee, was attending a meeting in Raleigh and, at the suggestion of Bob Pinson, tried to locate Lake Howard, my father, and Roland Couley, his musical associate. Mr. Marshall found my sister-in-law, Cynthia Howard, and left a questionnaire concerning my father for us to fill out. Even though I was excited about it, I am sorry to admit that for some reason I did not fill out the questionnaire at that time. Bringing up the past sometimes hurts, but it often helps us to live in today's world with all of its problems.

Three months ago I felt compelled to compile all the information on my father that was available. In these months I have found only four of his recordings - finding them was not easy but things worthwhile are often hard. However, I have acquired much information on my father in just a short while.

When my father was making records, I had not yet been born. The only memories I have of him are when he was sick. The Library of Congress Research Division helped by providing information previously unknown to me, such as how many records and on what dates they were recorded. Senator Walter B. Jones has assisted me through all of my work. His kindness and concern have been a real inspiration.

The Library of Congress also referred me to the John Edwards Memorial Foundation for whom this story is written. Personally, I am doing all I can to obtain additional information on my father, hoping this effort will bring him closer to me.

THE SINGING FARMER

Born 16 June 1913 in Greensboro, North Carolina, to Phillip and Bessie Howard, Lake Cornegie Howard was the second child. He had two brothers and one sister: Clifford, Parker, and Versie Mae. Their Christian mother parted from them at the age of twenty-eight. Lake was

only five years old when his mother died. Their father kept them together and reared them on the farm with a lot of hard work and sweat. He was both father and mother when times were hard and living wasn't easy.

Lake received his first guitar at the age of twelve. He wanted one for many years and his grandmother gave it to him for Christmas. His guitar cost \$8.00, which would be about like \$80.00 today. Lake kept the guitar under his bed and wouldn't let anyone touch it.

At the age of thirteen Lake started to work to develop his muscles. His biggest dream as a boy was to be just like Charles Atlas, the Muscle Man. Lake worked hard at it, and was always trying to prove his strength.

Lake lived on a farm all his life and before he married my mother he worked for his father on the farm. With no mother, they had to work on the farm as well as in the house. It took long hard hours just to make a living. Lake married my mother, Fronnie Ellen Casper, on 29 August 1932. They spent their entire married life on the farm, working God's rich soil and reaping the harvest. Lake finished only the eight grade in school, but he had the education of a high school graduate. His crops were good and he always came out ahead. He knew how to manage things and come out with money left over.

Lake would make up his songs and play his guitar under the tobacco barn. Back then tobacco was cured with wood and someone had to add the wood and watch the fire so there was a lot of spare time in between. He was known as the "Singing Farmer."

He began recording in August of 1934 for the American Record Corporation, which later became the Columbia Record Corporation. Lake and Roland Cauley played together and recorded some records together. They had won a talent contest in the old Central Warehouse in Kinston, North Carolina where the prize was a trip to New York to record.

Lake played at a dime store in Kinston. He played over a loud speaker, singing and picking the old-time favorites (the ones old-timers loved). People would come to listen and buy his records. Just before he appeared, someone would hand out leaflets with my father's picture and this advertisement - "J. B. Long, Manager of Nackansas Dollar Store, Kinston, N. C."

On 11 November 1974, Arther Cauley, son of Roland Cauley, and I, took a trip together to Burlington, N. C. to visit the man who started it all, Mr. J. B. Long. When Mr. Long was manager of Nackansas Dollar Store in Kinston, he took a great interest in Lake Howard as well as in the Cauley family, who on occasions played and recorded with my father. Mr. Long was the one who took my father and the Cauley family to New York.

It has been almost forty years but I can almost picture them going to New York. These were the depression years when an invitation to record in New York must have been a fantastic thrill. What a good time they must have had. It was forty years later that we took that trip together, recalling the memories of the past and playing tapes of our fathers' records. Time changes-history repeats itself. It was a very special day in our lives. One to cherish and remember.

An old advertisement read something like this: "Come in and meet Lake Howard and his guitar. You will agree with us he can certainly play it. Sings your old-time favorites. Although Lake is a new artist his records are very much in demand. He has just finished a series of broadcasts at WDNC, Durham, No. Carolina. Come in and hear him. He will appear at our store, Saturday, June 15, 1935."

Lake knew a lot of people and a lot of people knew and loved him. He was quite friendly. People have not forgotten him and even today recall things he said about them forty years ago. His memories live on.

Lake played a guitar, banjo, violin, and mandolin. He loved singing and picking his guitar most of all and put his heart and soul into all his music.

After all these years my father's records are still being played on the radio: a New York FM station plays some of them. However, he was most popular in Eastern North Carolina, but was known in many places in many different states by many people.

Lake did some broadcasting on WDNC, Durham, NC. My mother recalls those days very well. She said he sounded good over the radio, much better than on record. My brother, who was only three years old at the time, would listen to him on the radio and say "that's my daddy."

Competing against different musicians at a Fiddlers Convention at Deep Run High School (NC)

Lake won a contest. He won first prize singing and picking "I have No One to Love Me, but the Sailor on the Deep Blue Sea." My father patterned his picking after the Carter Family. He loved their picking and would play their records and try to play like them. They were his favorite country music stars. However, Lake did write much of his own music.

The recording time in my father's life was cut short. He was taken sick at the age of thirty-three with a brain tumor which was malignant. It was 9 April 1947 when he began to have awful headaches, but two years and many doctors later before his condition was accurately diagnosed. Doctors in Richmond, Virginia told my mother it was a brain tumor and operated on my father twice in nine days. The doctors gave him less than six months but he lived five years after the operations. He was paralyzed on his left side and could never pick his guitar again. He loved it so, that I feel sure putting up his instruments and playing no more music brought him as much suffering as his illness.

Mother had five children to raise. My oldest brother helped to run the farm but mother was the backbone of the family. Her most sincere prayer was that God let Lake live so all the children would remember him. We all remember him today. His memories live in our hearts. The memories I had were sad but writing this article has helped bridge the gap and brought my father back to me in a realistic way, as he surely must have been before his illness.

Lake became a Christian after his sickness. He read his Bible every day and lived for the Lord. God brought us through it all and kept us together. My father died 2 January 1954 at the age of forty and left five children and a wife to carry on without him. Writing this article about my father brings him very close to me and if he were living today I feel he would be proud of his "baby girl" for telling the story of the "Singing Farmer."

This is an excerpt from a book I hope to write in the future about our family: the good, the bad, the happy, the sad, the way it was.

The 1935 poster of Lake Howard on the following page was made available to the JEMF by Mrs. Hughes. The reproduction here has been "doctored" in that the original continuous tone photo, from which the half-tone of the poster was made, was used for making our negative. It too was lent to us by Mrs. Hughes.

Radio and Record Star

To Appear At The

UNITED DOLLAR STORE

=====SATURDAY, JUNE 15=====

Come in
and meet
"Lake"
and his
Guitar!



You will
agree with
us that
he certainly
can play
it,
singing your
old time
favorites!



Although
"Lake" is
a new artist,
his records
are very
much in
demand!



He has
just finished
a series of
Broadcasts
over WDNC
Durham, N. C.

Come in and
hear him!

The Singing Farmer --- LAKE HOWARD

HE WILL APPEAR
AT OUR STORE
SATURDAY,
JUNE 15
AT 11-1-3-5

HEAR HIM PLAY HIS LATEST RECORDINGS
"It's none of your business" — "I've got a stream-lined
Mama" — "I'll remember you love" — "The village by
the sea" — "When spring-time comes again, little Annie"
— "The orphan child" — "I have no one to love me" —
"I've lost my love" — "Walking in the light" — "Wish-
ing my father's home" — "Forsaken love"

HE WILL APPEAR
AT OUR STORE
SATURDAY,
JUNE 15
AT 11-1-3-5

UNITED DOLLAR STORE

LAKE HOWARD DISCOGRAPHY

Following is a complete discography of recordings made by Lake Howard, taken from information in the JEMF files. At the first session, Howard and the Cauley Family recorded some sides together and some separately. For convenience, the full session is listed here, including the Cauley Family numbers on which Howard did not appear. "Uncle" Art Satherley supervised the recordings at both sessions. Data on unissued sides are taken from Satherley's field notebooks.

The standard format is followed in the following listing: First column--master and issued take numbers; second column--title and instrumentation; third column--label credits; fourth column--release numbers and labels. Label names are abbreviated as follows: Pe = Perfect; Me = Melotone; Ro = Romeo; Or = Oriole; Ba = Banner; ARC = all of the five preceding (with the same release number).

7 August 1934, New York. American Record Corp.

Lake Howard, guitar -1, vocal -2; Roland Cauley, vocal -3, fiddle -4, (?) steel guitar -5; ----- Cauley, banjo -6; vocals by Cauley children -7. Abbreviated artist credits in 3rd column: LH = Lake Howard; CF = Cauley Family; RC = Roland Cauley.

15523-	Lover's Farewell	-1,2	LH	Ba 33281, Me 13248, Or 8407, Pe 13091, Ro 5407
15524	Snap Bean Blues	-1,3	RC	Unissued
15525	Leaving the Farm	-1,3	RC	Unissued
15526	Lenoir County Blues	-1,4,6	CF	Unissued
15527-	Duplin County Blues	-1,4	CF	Me 13114, Or 8373, Pe 13033, Ro 5373
15528-	Grey Eagle	-1,4	RC&LH	ARC 6-04-54
15529	East Carolina Waltz	-1,4	CF	Unissued

8 August 1934, New York.

As above.

15553-	Lumberton Wreck	-1,3,4,6,7	CF	Ba 37146, Me 13113, Or 8372, Pe 13032, Ro 5372
15554-	New River Train	-1,3,4,7	CF	Ba 37146, Me 13113, Or 8372, Pe 13032, Ro 5372
15555	Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane	-1,5	RC&LH	Unissued
15556	Troublesome Blues		RC&LH	Unissued
15557-	Medley--Darling Nelly Gray			
	and Little Brown Jug	-1,5	RC&LH	ARC 6-04-54

9 August 1934, New York.

As above.

15558-	New Chattanooga Mama	-1,2	LH	Ba 33145, Me 13112, Or 8371, Pe 13031, Ro 5371
15559-	Get Your Head in Here	-1,2	LH	Ba 33145, Me 13112, Or 8371, Pe 13031, Ro 5371
15560-	Don't Let Your Deal Go Down	-1,2	LH	Ba 33281, Me 13248, Or 8407, Pe 13091, Ro 5407
15561-	Chewing Chewing Gum	-1,2	LH	Ba 33388, Me 13355, Or 8449, Pe 13128, Ro 5449
15562-	Seaboard Waltz	-1,4,6	CF	Ba 33147, Me 13114, Or 8373, Pe 13033, Ro 5373
15563	Wayne County Blues	-1,4,6	CF	Unissued
15564	Nora Darling	-1,4,6	CF	Unissued
15565	Medley--Mississippi Sawyer/ Soldier's Joy	-1,4,6	CF	Unissued
15566	Ida Red	-1,4,6	CF	Unissued
15567	I Shall Not Be Moved	-1,3,4,7	CF&LH	Unissued

10 August 1934, New York.

As above.

15589	He Loves Me So	-1,4,?	CF&LH	Unissued
15590-	Love Me Darling, Love Me	-1,2	LH	Ba 33388, Me 13355, Or 8449, Pe 13128, Ro 5449

29 April 1935, New York. American Record Corp.

Lake Howard, vocal & guitar; joined by Bill Wakefield, vocal & guitar -1.

17404-	Forsaken Love	LH	ARC 5-11-57
17405-	I Have No One To Love Me (But the		
	Sailor On the Deep Blue Sea)	LH	Ba 33459, Me 13426, Or 8478, Pe 13151, Ro 5478

30 April 1935, New York.

As above.

17410-	Walking In the Light (Of the		
	Lord) - 1	LH&BW	ARC 6-01-55
17411-	Streamlined Mama	LH	ARC 35-09-24
17412-13	<i>Not applicable here</i>		
17414-	It's None Of Your Business	LH	Ba 33459, Me 13426, Or 8478, Pe 13151, Ro 5478
17415	<i>Not applicable here</i>		
17416-	I've Lost My Love	LH	ARC 35-09-24
17417-	Little Annie	LH	ARC 5-11-57

1 May 1935, New York.

As above.

17451	Village By the Sea	LH	Unissued
17452	The Orphan Child	LH	Unissued
17453	Within My Father's House	LH	ARC 6-01-55



The Ewen Hotel as it appeared in 1902.

(See article on J.B. Marcum on following pages)

THE DEATH OF J. B. MARCUM

By Donald Lee Nelson

"Bloody Breathitt" is the gruesome sobriquet often given to a county in eastern-central Kentucky which witnessed an unending stream of feuds commencing shortly after the termination of the Civil War and continuing on, almost without rest, until nearly the beginning of World War I. (This cutoff date is significant inasmuch as Breathitt was the only county in the United States which so overfilled its quota of volunteers to fight in the "war to end all wars" that not one of its sons needed to be drafted.)

There were four separate and distinct vendettas, and some of the lesser troubles were merely sub-feuds or offshoots of the major troubles.

Breathitt County near the turn of the century had a population approaching 9000, of which approximately twenty percent resided in Jackson, the county seat and largest town. The county itself is less than five hundred square miles in area, and at the beginning of the twentieth century, was one of the most inaccessible of such geographical divisions anywhere within the American borders. Even now this mountainous region is still only lightly perforated with the mark of man. Although its highest peaks are seldom over 1500 feet, their configurations give rise to the concept of remote austerity.

It is often true of the southern mountains, whose reputation for hard-drinking citizens is no more valid than New York City's for unchecked crime, that most such areas are "dry." Between the influences exerted by religious groups on the one hand, and the more selfish interests of bootleggers on the other, local option laws in eastern Kentucky are almost always stacked against legal whiskey. In 1871 Breathitt, in Kentucky's first such local option, voted for abstinence, and maintained this motif through the ensuing century. The anti-liquor law had nothing of a specific nature to do with the Marcum-Hargis-Cockrell feud, other than to add more ambiance to the incredible story.

As early as 1890, twenty-eight year old James Hargis and his brother Alex, both devout Democrats, had begun to feel the surge of political fever within their breasts. The mercantile store in Jackson which bore the Hargis name was one of the largest in the county. Although no railroads traversed Breathitt, and hauling by ox and mule teams was the only means of bringing supplies into the area, the brothers' enterprise became very successful.

Jim and Alex had several siblings, including Ben, Elbert, John, and Sara. All were to play important roles in the feud which was ebbing toward commencement.

By 1898 Jim Hargis had acquired a noteworthy share of the world's goods, and, confident of victory, ran for a county judgeship. Not all local Democrats supported the merchant, so the disenfranchised ones merged with the Republicans to form a Fusionist coalition.

The Democrat ticket, headed by Hargis for judge and Ed Callahan, a Crockettville storekeeper known as "Big Pistol," for sheriff, was declared elected. The Fusionists filed a suit to contest their defeat. They asked James Buchanan Marcum, a United States Commissioner and trustee of the Kentucky State College, to act as their attorney. Republican Marcum and his partner, Democrat O. H. Pollard, had one of the most successful law firms anywhere in eastern Kentucky. Marcum, known as "Buck," had been practicing in Jackson since 1886, and was a friend of the Hargis brothers. Ironically, Jim Hargis requested Pollard to represent him and Callahan.

It was now early 1899, and things were moving fast for the Hargis clan. Alex was a state senator, and Judge D. B. Redwine, a Hargis crony, had been chosen to preside over the state Democratic Convention. As the extension of Jim Hargis' stern hand, Redwine would lead the notorious "Music Hall Convention" through a series

of outrageous maneuvers which culminated in the selection of candidates William Goebel for governor and J. C. W. Beckham for lieutenant governor. Since Republican strength in the Bluegrass State was not great at that time, this meant almost certain election for the Judge's favorites.

With the institution of proceedings against the Hargis victory in Breathitt, all concerned parties began the chess-like maneuvers preliminary to a trial. During the taking of depositions in Marcum's office an argument arose between him and Pollard; before a fist fight could begin Marcum and Jim Hargis both drew their revolvers. By some miracle no shots were fired, but Marcum ordered Pollard, Hargis, and Callahan from his office. A mutual declaration severed the law partnership.

The three angered and insulted Democrats swore out a warrant against Buck Marcum, and Police Judge T. P. Cardwell, Jr., a son of State Senator Thomas P. Cardwell, issued warrants for the arrest of the Republican attorney on a charge of brandishing a weapon in a threatening manner. Marcum surrendered and paid a twenty dollar fine. When he told Cardwell the circumstances of the trouble, the police magistrate called for the arrest of James Hargis on a similar charge. The judge-elect and Cardwell had been enemies for many years, and Hargis refused to be tried by him. Instead he went to Magistrate Edwards, a personal friend. Judge Cardwell refused to yield to Edwards and ordered Marshal Tom Cockrell to arrest the erring Hargis. Cockrell was nineteen years old, and, in spite of being a lawman, was along with his younger brothers and sisters, a ward of Dr. Braxton D. Cox, Jr., Judge Cardwell's brother-in-law.

Tom Cockrell, accompanied by his older brother, Jim, entered Hargis Brothers Store, which was located just across the street from the Courthouse, to take the questionably elected judge into custody. In the almost unbelievable series of events that followed, Hargis, at being told of his arrest, went for his pistol, but Tom beat him to the draw. Sheriff Callahan, standing by, drew down on the marshal. Jim Cockrell covered Callahan. Again, bloodshed was averted. In an effort to stem the angry passions, Marcum sent word that he wished the charges against Hargis dropped.

The Fusionists lost their contest, and James Hargis became Judge Hargis, officially. Later that same year Marcum and Hargis were again at loggerheads. The stuffing of ballot boxes, voting of children, and even the registering of dead men had been common in remote areas during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. In an effort to move Breathitt County into the modern era, the Republican attorney, decrying such practices, accused the Democrat Judge of trying to vote a minor in a schoolboard election. Discussing the incident at a later time, Hargis said Marcum "flew into a range... pulled his pistol... but did not shoot," later "... we again became friends."

Concurrent with the events in Jackson, on 30 January, 1900 Governor-elect William Goebel was shot on the Capitol grounds in Louisville, and died within three days. J. C. W. Beckham, another Hargis favorite, became the state's chief executive.

But to return to the Jackson situation, Jim Marcum had long been an enemy of Ed Callahan, and their political differences were only a catalyst. Over twenty years earlier, during the Strong-Callahan feud, which involved Ku Kluxing on the Callahan side, Marcum's uncle, Captain Bill Strong, had supposedly slain the newly elected sheriff's father. Ed himself had always been thought of as the man who had assassinated Captain Strong. Even with the passage of two decades Callahan was a well of hatred towards the decedents of those whom he felt had murdered his father. Inasmuch as Hargis and Callahan were now inexorably welded together, the rift between them and the Marcum-Cockrell faction was irreparable.

Now that Hargis victory was fully sanctioned and conceded to by all, he and Alex were in complete command of Breathitt politics. There was no doubt about their ability to "deliver the vote" by those in the state capital, and their favor was ardently curried. Another irony of the Marcum-Hargis troubles was that Alex Hargis was married to a sister of Mrs. James Marcum.

The grim hand of death, which had so miraculously been deterred in Jackson, finally reached out to touch the first victim in early 1902. Marshal Tom Cockrell and Ben Hargis, the Judge's youngest brother, met in one of the town's "blind tigers." A violent argument

erupted and shots were exchanged, leaving Ben dead and the peace officer badly wounded.

During the ensuing Hargis-instigated prosecution of young Tom Cockrell, so incredible a barrage of perjury was cast upon the pre-trial court that the real events were clouded and lost for all time.

In his arraignment before Judge Redwine, Tom Cockrell was bound over for trial without bail. J. B. Marcum, who was related to the Cockrells, and a close friend of their guardian, Dr. Cox, stated he would defend Tom without fee.

A sidelight of the snowballing tragedy, but of vital chronological significance, occurred on a train near Beattyville, some twenty miles from Jackson, in neighboring Lee County. Railroad Detective Jerry Cardwell, a cousin of both the police judge and Dr. Cox's wife, and nephew of State Senator Cardwell, was asked by the conductor to subdue a rowdy and drunken passenger. A gun battle resulted, leaving Detective Cardwell seriously injured and the obstreperous commuter, John Hargis, known as "Tige," dead. This was the second of the Judge's brothers to die within a few weeks time.

Death did not stop there. . . "Not two without three" came home to the Hargis clan when a half-brother was killed from ambush as he and his wife were at home one evening making sorghum. The slayer was never found, and inasmuch as the deceased was not an active participant in the troubles, there were never even any suspects.

With his brother Tom in jail for the killing of Ben Hargis, Jim Cockrell, now town marshal was, along with Dr. Cox, busy securing evidence for the upcoming trial. Both were aware that a court in Jackson would be inundated with Hargis influence, consequently every scintilla of testimony supportive to the defendant was vital.

The Cockrells were orphans. Their mother's brother was married to Judge Hargis' half-sister Sara, who was a full sister to the half-brother slain in his home. Although Jim Cockrell was of age, and those of his family were related to the Cardwells, as well as being cousins of J. B. Marcum, it remained for Dr. Cox, as husband of Cordella Cardwell, to under-

take the sponsorship of the Cockrell children.

On the night of 13 April, 1902, Dr. Cox, who lived almost directly across the street from Judge Hargis, was called from his home at about 8 P. M. to attend to a patient. The doctor proceeded up the street in the direction of the Courthouse. As he passed a horse barn owned by the Judge, he was shot in ambush. Two bullets were fired into his body. The Cockrell clan clamored for justice, emphasizing their belief that their kinsman had died as a result of his support of Tom Cockrell. It was later proven that both Judge Hargis and Sheriff Callahan, both "duly" elected peace officers, were standing in the back yard of the stable at the time the shots were fired, yet neither, they claimed, made a move to ascertain what had happened. The thirty-five year old Cox had been the most respected physician in the area, and was not an active feudist, save for the interest invested in his ward's upcoming trial. At the time of the killing, Jim Marcum had been in Washington on business pertaining to his U. S. Commissionership.

Some of Breathitt's leading citizens requested Governor Beckham to intervene in the situation by dispatching state militia to the terrorized mountain county. Beckham was very cognizant of his political debt to the Hargis clan, and upon receiving their assurances that things were fine in Jackson, declined to send troops.

In the late spring of 1902 another Hargis relative entered the scene. He was Curtis Jett, one of twelve children of the Judge's half-sister Sara. He left his native Madison County, located some fifty miles west and north of Breathitt, to secure work with his powerful uncles. Again, Jett was a genealogical enigma. His mother was related to the Hargises, but his father, Hiram, who had died when Curt was only six, was a brother to Tom and Jim Cockrell's mother, thereby distantly relating him to Dr. Cox's widow. He was also a removed cousin of Marcum, and Mrs. Marcum was his aunt's sister.

Curt was given a job as a deputy sheriff although his reputation in the Bluegrass State was already fierce. He had often served time in the Richmond jail for "shooting up the town," and had twice been accused of rape. In mid-July 1902 he and Jim Cockrell, his first cousin, met in the dining room of the Arlington Hotel in

Jackson. What was said is not recorded, but it is not too difficult to imagine the paraphrased dialogue of insults and threats which resulted in shooting. Considering the dread in which each of their foes held the two participants, it is undoubtedly the most amazing incident of the entire feud in that neither man was wounded.

About a week after his violent meeting with Curt Jett, Jim Cockrell was shot to death. At noon of 26 July, the town marshal was standing to the main street, in front of Judge Cardwell's office. A fusillade of shots were fired from the second floor of the Courthouse. Five shells struck Cockrell as he sought cover, and he died in a matter of moments.

Again, both Hargis and Callahan were on the scene, this time on the second floor of the Hargis Brothers Store. Inasmuch as the street was well-trafficked, the sheriff acted. He ordered that no one enter the Courthouse to attempt to apprehend the assassins because it would be too dangerous. His reasoning was unintentionally sound. No siege was placed on the official building, and the killers, thought to be three in number, were smuggled out that night on horses brought in by friends.

Around Jackson it was whispered that Curt Jett had been one of the trigger men. A witness, Captain John Patrick, saw one of the killers. Fearing for his life he went to Lexington and told authorities there that he and another man had seen the slaying. When word of this reached Judge Redwine, the jurist sent a warrant for Patrick, compelling him to return to Breathitt to testify. Fortunately, the Lexington authorities were aware of the camouflaged attempt to wrest Patrick away to his death, and refused to surrender him. The captain made it clear that he would go home and confront those whom he accused if Governor Beckham would send troops. Beckham refused, stating that he had been told by the responsible citizenry of Jackson that the district was secure from lawlessness.

Governor Beckham was a political crony of Judge Redwine, and pardoned over two dozen hardened criminals at the magistrate's request. Most of these newly released felons came to the judge's town to secure employment as Hargis henchmen. Public pressure to force Beckham to act contrary to the Redwine-Hargis interest had not been sufficient to re-

turn Captain Patrick to Breathitt County under guard, but, commensurate with Jim Marcum's stature throughout the state, Beckham did grant Tom Cockrell a change of venue. Now recovered from his wounds, the former town marshal was to be tried for the killing of Ben Hargis. Tom's fate was removed totally from Redwine's clutches, and Judge Ira Julian, a fearless jurist from the state capitol was to preside over his trial, scheduled for Campton, Wolfe County, Breathitt's neighbor to the north. Although a journey of only twenty-five miles was necessary to travel from Jackson to Campton, both Alex and Jim Hargis declined to go, claiming they feared assassination. Considering the enormous entourage of armed henchmen they employed, their vulnerability seemed slight, giving rise to the assumption that they feared exposure as perjury subordinators. Their hue and cry for vengeance against their brother's killer was quitted. When Judge Julian called for the prosecution to commence proceedings against Tom Cockrell, no witnesses were present, and he was freed.

This was a victory for the Marcum forces, but it only served to make their enemies more determined to obliterate them. Buck Marcum, hearing rumors of trouble headed his way, became cautious, refusing to venture out on the streets at night. The law practice he had so judiciously cultivated was conducted from his home. He began to be looked upon as a marked man by the townspeople.

On 9 November, 1902 he wrote a tragic and imploring letter to the Lexington Herald, stating that more than thirty feud-related murders had taken place in his county since the previous Christmas Eve. Those who read his "open letter" knew he spoke the truth. Kentucky's history for the past half-century had been marked by a dozen such feuds. The annihilation of vast numbers of people in such affairs was well known. For this reason the Marcum letter went sadly unheeded. Readers accepted the facts and concluded that, as Marcum stated, he was destined to be slain. Dr. Cox was dead, so was Jim Cockrell, and the attorney was virtually a prisoner in his own home. The public was to wait, unsure of the date or time, to learn the exact details of their foregone conclusion... James B. Marcum's assassination.

Buck Marcum had given details and specifics which, rather than enraging the citizenry

and compelling official interference, only served to whet appetites for the crescendo which was forthcoming. Marcum stated that on the night of 30 May, 1902 a client, one Moses Feltner, came to his home to warn him of a plot on his life. Feltner was a defendant in a murder case involving the French-Eversole feud, a contemporary vendetta which had taken place in Perry County, just south of Breathitt. In an almost comic sidelight, Feltner, unsure of receiving a fair trial in his own bailiwick, had been given a change of venue to Breathitt.

Feltner told of being approached by certain officials of the county to kill Marcum. These men promised they would have him freed for his part in the case now pending, as well as keep him out of trouble for complicity in the attorney's death. Mose displayed \$35.00 which had been given to him as corroboration of his story. Marcum, knowing that Feltner had not previously had that sum of money, became convinced of his sincerity. To further show his lawyer what was transpiring, the Perry Countian took him to a spot some two hundred yards from the newly built Marcum home where shrubbery concealed four Winchester rifles and a double-barreled shotgun. Mose Feltner told him that he was considered the ideal person to turn Marcum's home into a Gethsemane because, as a client, he could ingratiate himself into his attorney's confidence. White pretending to side with the Hargis faction, he was keeping faith with Marcum. He was thus able to keep the intended victim appraised of the melange of plots to take his life.

For over ten weeks Marcum had been a prisoner in his own home. Looking out of his window one day he saw the windowshade of a nearby home raised about four inches. He knew this meant a rifleman was waiting to get a clear shot at him. This further restricted his movements, forcing him to not only stay off the front porch, but away from the windows as well.

After the Marcum letter was published, the attorney felt it had insured a certain degree of safety for him. In making the names of his enemies known to the world, he felt that he had blocked their overt efforts against him. He began to venture out, always in the company of his wife or children. He knew that no mountain desperado, regardless of his other moral laxities, would ever endanger a woman or child.

In present day society it is difficult to grasp this oddly chivalrous attitude on the part of hired killers, yet it was an absolute.

As tensions seemed to relax somewhat, Marcum began to go out alone. He could have hardly felt "safe" in the context of the word as it is known today, but the hope that those who had directed so much trouble his way might have relaxed their intentions of physical assault on him, if not their hatreds, was surely in his conscious thoughts.

On Monday, 4 May 1903, J. B. Marcum arose early, hoping to catch up on some of his professional affairs, problems which had been somewhat in limbo since the deaths of Dr. Cox and Jim Cockrell. He left his home, which was situated on a hill in an outlying area of the town about 7:45 A. M. for his walk to the business district. He arrived at the Courthouse just after it opened at eight. He filed some papers with the Clerk of the Court, and was leaving the building by the front door to go to his office when he met Captain Benjamin J. Ewen. Ewen, owner of a large, recently constructed hotel, was a deputy sheriff, but not a member of the Hargis clique. The two men stopped to chat on the stairs which ascended from the sidewalk to the Courthouse door. They were across the street from Hargis Brothers Store, and must surely have been aware of the Judge and Sheriff Callahan who were seated on rocking chairs directly opposite them.

As Ewen and Marcum talked for some twenty minutes about the troubles in Breathitt, the streets began to fill with citizenry on various errands. The Courthouse steps were wide enough to permit the two men to converse without impeding the increasing flow of persons entering and leaving the county offices.

At about 8:25 A. M. a Hargis man, one Thomas White, appeared on the street. Callo-way Strong, a distant relative of Marcum's, but friendly with White, asked Tom to have a drink with him, recommending a local "blind tiger." White, who was well known for favoring such establishments, declined, saying he was looking for someone. Within five minutes White began to saunter menacingly toward where Marcum and Ewen were in conversation. As he passed the two men, Tom White looked at the attorney in a threatening manner, deliberately catching his eye. Marcum remarked to Ewen, "He is a

bad man, Ben. I am afraid of him." White held glances with Marcum, causing, as he passed, the intended victim to follow him with his eyes. Not knowing White's intent, the lawyer slowly pivoted himself to observe the intruder. When Marcum's body was turned so that his back was to the entrance hall of the Courthouse, Curtis Jett, inside the corridor, and partly hidden by a portable partition, fired a bullet into his back. Marcum uttered, "My God, they have killed me," as he staggered and fell. His hand had been resting on Captain Ewen's shoulder, and in falling he spun the hotel owner around so that he was able to clearly see Jett advance with a forty-four in his hand toward the fallen attorney. Knowing his own life was now in danger, Ewen retreated. Jett stopped within a short distance and fired another shell into the prostrate Marcum. The first bullet had entered his back, near the spine, passing through him and imbedding itself in the board sidewalk nearby. The second shot went through the top of Marcum's head.

His deadly work done, Curt Jett returned through the Courthouse hall to a side door from where he exited.

So horrifying a shock was the arrogant manner in which Marcum was done to death, his body lay untouched for nearly fifteen minutes. His friends feared to go to him lest the assassin might stay them too---if not then, surely at some future time. Again, as in the Cox and Cockrell slayings, the Judge and Sheriff were in close proximity to the scene, yet neither man made any effort to apprehend the slayer, or even to investigate what had transpired.

Callahan's first act was to declare the Courthouse off limits to searchers, using once more the ploy that it was unsafe. After a quarter of an hour, he finally acquiesced, but by this time Curt Jett was far away. Captain Ewen was summoned to Hargis' store. With a melange of toughs around, he told the Judge he had seen nothing. The jurist complimented him as a "smart fellow."

Mrs. Marcum, though overcome by grief at being widowed with five children to raise, so bitterly denounced her husband's murderers that a storm was raised. Since Breathitt was in the throes of panic, no one could be found who would agree to act as coroner, therefore,

no autopsy was performed and no inquest was held.

Jackson had two weekly newspapers at the time, and they were probably the only ones in the entire Bluegrass State which did not mention the Marcum killing in banner headlines. Although Breathitt County was virtually cut off from the outside world, more even by geographical barriers than by feudal-lord control, word reached the nation quickly. Governor Beckham, realizing that his political head was on the block in an upcoming election, offered \$500 reward for information leading to Marcum's murderers.

Some days later, at his home, Captain Ewen confided to several newsmen about what had really happened in the murder, but swore them to secrecy until he could get safely out of Jackson. Within a short time after Ewen's secret statement, word came that he had been slain. Not waiting to verify the rumor, one newsman then printed "the late Captain Ewen's statement." In truth, Ewen was very much alive, and when the story got out he had to be smuggled out of the area in a packing crate. When he got to Lexington he told all, promising to testify if he were given protection.

With word out that Jett was the killer, ironically it was his own relatives--his cousin, Tom Cockrell, and Sam Jett, who was both his and the Cockrell's uncle--who swore out a warrant against him.

On 10 May, six days after Marcum's death, word reached Sheriff Woodson McChord of Clark County that Curtis Jett had gone to visit his mother who was living with her new husband, Linville Higgins, near Boonesborough, in Madison County, some fifty miles from Jackson. Why the Madison County sheriff was not placed in charge of the posse is unknown. The Higgins home, situated under a cliff on the Kentucky River was difficult to reach. The officers rode in buggies part way, and went the remaining distance on foot. They knocked on the cabin door, and were greeted by Mrs. Higgins, who told them her son was asleep, but they might see him if they so desired. The sheriff and one deputy entered Jeff's room and awakened him. Since his mother was in the house, Curtis surrendered without argument, leaving his pistol with her.

Sheriff McChord took the gunman to the

Winchester Jail, where newsmen anxiously tried to get a statement. Here Jett became surly and reverted, in attitude if not in actions, to the terror of Jackson.

Tom White was arrested in Breathitt County deep in the mountains, by state troopers under the command of Captain Ernest Bell of Lexington and C. J. Little. When the lawmen were informed of White's whereabouts, a friend was sent to warn the wanted man to flee. The friend did not travel quickly enough, discounting the dedication of the troopers to their purpose. The lawmen got to White at three o'clock in the morning, and he meekly surrendered.

On 25 May, three weeks after the killing, mainly on evidence supplied by Ben Ewen, White and Jett were indicted by a Breathitt County Grand Jury for the murder of J. B. Marcum. Only with state troopers protecting the townspeople, was such a thing possible. The following day the two gunmen were returned to Jackson under heavy guard.

Commonwealth Attorney Floyd Byrd argued for a change of venue. Judge Redwine, under great pressure from both the outraged public and the ever-dangerous Hargises, offered to hold the trial in West Liberty, Morgan County, some forth miles north of Jackson. Inasmuch as Morgan County was also a mountain division heavily influenced by the Hargis faction, and had a virtually escape-assured jail, Byrd declined.

On 12 June the trial began in Jackson. Some of the brightest legal minds in Kentucky arrayed both sides of the aisle. Byrd, a freind of Judge Hargis' had been picked as lead representative for the prosecution, along with Thomas Marcum, who had returned to his native state from Oklahoma to avenge his brother's death; also on the state's team was Captain W. L. Hurst, who was both Judge Redwin's father-in-law and Mrs. J. B. Marcum's uncle. John B. O'Neal of Covington, Benjamin Golden of Barbourville, Knox County (a luminary in the Colson-Scott tragedy), Judge B. F. French, who, like Marcum's friend Feltner, was involved in Perry County's French-Eversole War, and four or five other famed members of the bar had been retained by the Hargis faction for Jett and White. The only defense attorney from Jackson was a young man called "Rat Ankles" Noble...this appellation derived

from his refusal ever to wear socks.

During one day of the trial, Captain Ewen, looking from the bell tower of the Courthouse, saw his hotel in flames. He quickly called for help, sending friends to save his family from the holocaust. Troopers were dispatched to help fight the fire. On their way from their bivouac area to the burning hotel they had to cross a bridge. Beneath this structure soldiers caught armed men lying in wait, ostensibly to gun Captain Ewen to death as he rushed to aid his loved ones.

Undaunted, Ewen, his hotel a total loss, but his family miraculously safe, testified unequivocally about the events of the morning of 4 May. Several other Jacksonians, bolstered by Ewen's mettle, supplied corroborative evidence.

To those who had whispered that Floyd Byrd would never prosecute Jim Hargis' nephew with any but a half-hearted effort, the trial itself proved a revelation. At the conclusion of a "no holds barred" effort on both sides, the case was, on 18 June, given to the jury. The twelve good men and true were all citizens of Magoffin County, Breathitt's neighbor to the northeast. They had been impanelled in the hope of relieving some of the pressure from the belabored local public. When the dozen impartial citizens declared themselves to be deadlocked at eleven to one for conviction, everyone was stunned. The sole saviour of Jett and White was Burns Fitzpatrick, the son-in-law of a Breathitt man supposedly friendly to Judge Hargis. Fitzpatrick was rumored to have later boasted that he received \$500 and a new Winchester rifle for his dissenting vote. This charge was never corroborated.

The second White-Jett trial received a change of venue so affirmative that it must have gratified the prosecution beyond its most fervent hopes. The sight was to be Cynthiana, Harrison County, a rural area out of the mountains, and some thirty-five miles northeast of Lexington. New witnesses, many who had been reluctant to speak in Jackson, even in the presence of the state troopers, came forth. The only major change in legal staffs was the prosecution's addition of Harrison County Attorney, J. Stanley Webster.

In the trial itself, presided over by

Judge J. J. Osborne, a flood tide of perjurers supplied contradictory reasons why the defendants were innocent. Their testimonies were often so superficially contrived that the grossness of their efforts gave aid to the prosecution. One man in particular, A. C. Addams, a resident of Breathitt, admitted lying as an alibi witness for Curt Jett. He pled guilty to the charge, saying he had a wife and children who were defenseless against the Hargis group. Explaining that he had been given a suit of clothes from Hargis' Store and twenty-five dollars in cash, Addams made it pathetically clear that he had previously been a model citizen who had acted under great duress. He declared that defense attorney French had been in on the machinations leading to his false testimony. Stanley Webster spoke of Addams to the court, "I would rather see Callahan and French in the penitentiary at Frankfort for life than this man."

At Jett and White's trial both Judge Hargis and Sheriff Callahan emphasized that they had not seen what took place on the day in question because the gun smoke had been so thick. Byrd and company proved that Curt had used smokeless powder in his weapon. The fitting climax to the proceedings came when Thomas Marcum, with a combination of legal dignity and kinsman's outrage, cross-examined Tom White. So vehement was his onslaught that White's own attorney was forced to ask for a recess in order to compose himself.

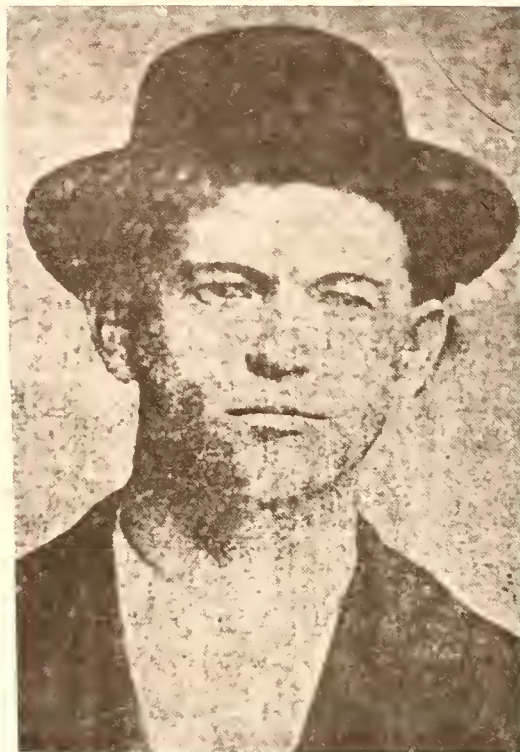
Stanley Webster's closing remarks for the Commonwealth served to condemn, by name and specifics, both James Hargis and Ed Callahan, reiterating that Jett and White were only the tools used by these two feudal barons.

When the Harrison County jury returned its verdict to "guilty" there was great rejoicing in the prosecution's camp. One juror, John Jasper "Jap" King, said to have had borne a grudge against County Attorney Webster, refused to vote for the death penalty, although eleven of his fellows were for it. Rather than cause a mistrial, the others yielded to King on this point and delivered a verdict calling for life imprisonment for both defendants. As a footnote to the trial, King was later to be cited by Judge Osborne for contempt of court because he had discussed the case with other jurors before the trial had ended.

In spite of the consistent allegations and flood of evidence which pointed to the Judge and Sheriff of Breathitt as the "Svengalis" who had caused Buck Marcum's death, they were to escape conviction for the deed. Five times tried, with each effort ending in a hung jury, the two men were nonetheless divested of their power to intimidate and slay at will. A final jury, at Sandy Hook, Elliot County, virtually showed the duo responsible, although they escaped technical guilt. Mrs. Marcum was awarded an uncontested \$8000 judgment against James Hargis when it was shown that, after the Marcum letter appeared in the Lexington Herald in November, 1972 telling of unsafe conditions in Breathitt, the then Judge had offered to prove his faith in Marcum's safety by insuring his life for \$100,000.

The political and financial defeat of the lords of Breathitt did not end their story, however.

On 6 February, 1908 James Hargis was in his store. For some time he and his only son, Beauchamp, called "Beech," had been at odds. The elder Hargis claimed his offspring was indolent and would come to nothing. He had reportedly struck the younger man on more than one occasion. On the day under discussion Beech was sitting near the counter in the store with a gun he had taken from his father's office. The Judge spotted his son and approached him in an aggressive manner. When only a yard separated the two, Beech fired point-blank. The elder man came to grips with his attacker, the gun discharged four more times, and as bystanders rushed to separate the two, they found Jim Hargis sitting on his son on the floor and, with five wounds in him, had still managed to wrest the gun away. The mortally wounded feudist handed the weapon to someone, declaring, "He has shot me all to pieces." With that the powerful Breathitt overlord died, like J. B. Marcum, in his forty-fifth year. In further irony, less than a month previously, the Judge had journeyed to Louisville, perhaps in a mood of premonition, to select a casket for himself. Just prior to his fatal altercation he had asked his nephew, W. S. Jett, Curt's brother (but not a member of the feuding clique), who was employed in the store, to be certain that, whenever death might come to him, to make certain he was buried in the specific casket he had so carefully chosen.



THREE VICTIMS OF THE ASSASSIN IN BREATHITT.



Upper left: Judge James Hargis; upper right: Curtis Jett; below: Cox, Marcum, and Cockrell

Beech Hargis was found guilty of murder and sent to Frankfort. After his release he disappeared and was never heard from again. The real victim of the Hargis curse was the Judge's aged mother. Four times in six years she had seen a son taken to his final resting place. In the nearly seven decades since Jim Hargis' death, the cemetery which houses his remains has become overrun with wild Sassafras bushes, and gives little hint of the power once held by the man whose remains lie within.

After his rugged tenure as sheriff, Ed Callahan was still not to be free from trouble. He got into an argument with his brother-in-law, John Deaton, and in the fracas that followed was so seriously cut with a butcher knife that he almost lost his arm. Young Wilson Callahan, seeing his father's peril, killed his Uncle John. From that time forth, it had been Deatons versus Callahans.

On 3 May, 1910, one day short of seven years after the death of Jim Marcum, Ed Callahan, still the leader of his clan, and now a wealthy merchant and landowner in Crockettville, was shot from ambush and seriously wounded. After the attempt on his life, the former sheriff built a stockade around his store with an enclosed walkway leading from his home to his business. In this way the feudist could conduct his trading and return to his house, which was located to the rear and side of the store, without ever having to expose himself to a possible assassin. The situation was reminiscent of the siege under which Buck Marcum lived just prior to his untimely death.

The next attempt on Callahan's life took place on the morning of 4 May, 1912---on the ninth anniversary of the day Jett slew Marcum. A rifleman (or riflemen) waited on a hill across the road from the Crockettville store. There were a few peek spaces between the logs in the Callahan stockade-store, but not many. At about nine in the morning on that day the proprietor was talking on the telephone, which was located near one of these lookout slits. When he terminated his conversation and started back towards the counter a volley of shots rang out. One bullet struck him just about the knee, and another entered his chest. Although several other shots were fired, these two were the only ones which hit the target. Surgeons from Lexington and elsewhere were

summoned to work over the badly wounded man, but to no avail. Callahan died, forgiving his enemies, and was buried by his mother's side in the Crockettville Cemetery. Governor James B. McCreary pledged \$400 of the state's money for information leading to the slain feudist's killers, but they were never discovered.

Curtis Jett entered Frankfort State Prison a hardened, brutal man. For some time he was incorrigible and sullen. Gradually he began to change. He became engrossed in religion, taking a correspondence course, and spoke of entering the ministry should he ever leave confinement. His mother, Mrs. Sara Higgins, and his brother William both worked very hard to secure his release. Finally, and the date in question is uncertain, but thought to be about 1914 or 1915, Governor A. O. Stanley pardoned both Curt and Tom White.

Tom returned to Breathitt County where he had a small cabin. He was a frequent visitor at the homes of friends, and was, because of his free and easy way, a favorite of children. He was known to often sing the Marcum ballad discussed below, and seemed amused by it. He never wore shoes, kept his pant legs rolled up almost to his knees, and rode a mule anywhere he wanted to do. He had been a heavy drinker in his feudal days, and continued in this mode after his pardon. One night, possibly while under the influence of liquor, he fell near the fireplace in his cabin. Whether he was knocked unconscious or passed out, the flames touched his clothing, and he was burned to death. This supposedly occurred in the 1930s.

When Curt Jett left prison he went to a preacher's college at Wilmore, Jessamine County. At the time Harlan was in the throes of union wars, and Curt, aside from preaching in Evarts and Wallin's Creek, worked as a guard and "gun thug" for the mine owners. After this he returned to Madison County where he entered, like both Jim Hargis and Ed Callahan, the mercantile business. He began his enterprise with \$15,000, but extended too much credit, and was forced to close. Afterwards he returned to Harlan, but left during the late thirties to spend his remaining years in the Richmond area. He continued to preach all during this time. He was very reluctant to discuss the Marcum killing, especially in later years, but did maintain that he did not blame his uncles for the

trouble he had encountered. He is known to have mentioned the Marcum ballad on at least two occasions to performers of the song. Once to Asa Martin, saying that it was "a pretty true story," and in a letter to Doc Hopkins he mentioned hearing Doc do the song on the radio. He requested Doc to sing it again over the air, and to dedicate it to him. He admitted that he was the

man who had slain Marcum. Curt was twice married after his release, first in 1926, and again, about ten years later. Both unions ended in divorce. The "tragic end" syndrome which had plagued the participants in the Breathitt wars escaped Curtis Jett. He died of a heart attack in Richmond in 1946, at the age of seventy-seven.

NOTE ON SOURCES

The author wishes to thank the following residents of the Commonwealth of Kentucky for their assistance and cooperation in the preparation of this article: Mr. Charles Hayes, President, Breathitt County Historical Society; Miss Christine Wright; Mr. Asa Martin; Mr. Paul Jett; Mr. John J. Price; Mr. Trap Helton, Jailer, Harlan County; residents of the town of Jackson, and last, but certainly not least, the staff of the Cynthiana Democrat. In addition, the following printed sources were used:

Famous Kentucky Trials and Tragedies, L. F. Johnson (Lexington: Henry Clay Press, 1972, original edn. 1916)

Stories of Kentucky Feuds, Harold Wilson Coates (Knoxville: Holmes-Darst Coal Corp. 1923)

In the Land of Breathitt---The Feud Country, Federal Writers Project---American Guide Series (Northport, New York: Bacon, Percy & Daggett 1941)

Kentucky, Land of Contrast, Thomas D. Clark (New York: Harper & Row 1968)

Various issues of the following newspapers: Louisville Courier-Journal, Log Cabin (Cynthiana, Kentucky)

APPENDIX: Cast of Major Characters

Edward "Ned" Callahan: Sheriff of Breathitt and cohort of Judge Hargis.

Jim Cockrell: Older brother of Tom, became town marshal after Tom's arrest for murder.

Tom Cockrell: Town marshal of Jackson until accused of murder in the death of Ben Hargis.

Dr. Braxton D. Cox: Leading physician of Jackson and guardian of the Cockrell children.

Captain B. J. Ewen: Deputy sheriff of Breathitt, but not a Hargis man; was talking to Marcum at the time he was slain.

James Hargis: Democrat judge and feudal lord of Breathitt County.

Curtis Jett: Cousin of the Cockrells and half-nephew of Judge Hargis; was a deputy sheriff at the time he slew Marcum.

J. B. Marcum: Republican lawyer and unofficial head of anti-Hargis faction.

D. B. Redwine: County Judge and crony of the Hargis group.

Thomas White: Like his friend, Jett, an employee of the Hargis clan; decoyed Marcum's attention at the time Jett killed him.

ABOUT THE SONGS

The authorship of the Marcum ballad is attributed to Blind Bill Day, a Rowan County, Kentucky resident, later immortalized in Jean Thomas' book, The Singing Fiddler of Lost Hope Hollow. Day is supposed to have sung and fiddled the piece on the streets of Morehead, Rowan's county seat.

The song, twice recorded by early-day rural musicians, was also later done by a few other performers including Johnny Mercer. A trio consisting of Ted Chestnut, Asa Martin, and Fiddlin' Doc Roberts was the first to put the ballad on wax. They recorded it for the Gennett Company in August 1928. The other early recording was made for Brunswick by Lester McFarland and Robert A. Gardner, better known as "Mac and Bob," shortly thereafter. Although the Mac and Bob effort was not the first, it will, because of its length and content, be used in this discussion as the definitive version.

The ballad itself is quite accurate in both its narrative and event sequences, combining some very special details including date, time, and parts played by the lesser lights of the drama such as Tom White, Captain Ewen, and Burns Fitzpatrick, ---as well, of course as the main characters, ---both trials, the verdicts, and still had time for a realistic moralization.

A couple of errors do occur, possibly due to the jumbling of facts either in the original reporting of the story, or perhaps because Day, being sightless, needed to rely on hearing reports from others, and may have become confused on juxtaposition. First, White did not come through the Courthouse hall, he was outside; second, and this is more inference, the song advances the impression that Judge Redwine was an impartial jurist, and not a friend of Hargis. The ballad also uses the words, "...condemned both White and Jett," inferring falsely, that the death penalty was, if not, exacted, at least ordered. These are minor points, and actually included here to highlight the accuracy of Day's work; only miniscule errors appeared in his text.

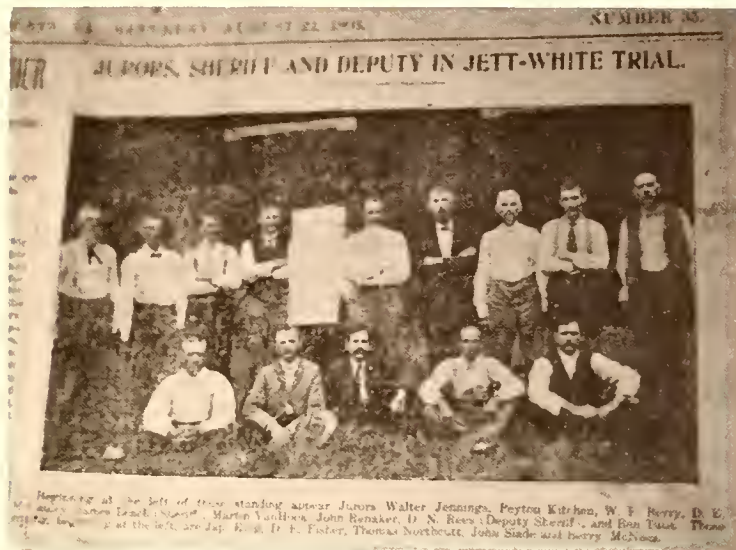
The tune by which the song is sung is "Jesse James." The "Marcum leaves a wife..." verse is almost a direct parody on the James theme. In the ballad Marcum takes the part of the slain Missouri outlaw, and Robert Ford is replaced by Curt Jett. There is one extremely significant difference, however. In "James," the slayer, Ford, is accredited with being a craven individual; this because the concept of back-shooting was, to romanticisers of the old west, the epitome of cowardice. The more realistic people of the vendetta-oriented mountaineers knew that a feudist would shoot from ambush or in the back, not from fear, but out of expediency. The mountain killer likewise accepted the certainty that when his time came he, too, would be slain without a chance to defend himself. The mere concept of the scenario of two men meeting at high noon on the main street of a town to draw and fire on the last stroke of twelve by the town clock was, to a mountaineer, just plain silly. Curt Jett, for example, was anything but a coward. Just prior to the slaying of Marcum, Jett had, twice, saved persons from accidental death at great personal risk, and he had "shot it out" with Jim Cockrell in the dining room of the Arlington Hotel; it will also be remembered that he never attempted to save himself by blaming, or even naming, those who put him up to murder. His actions well bespeak a desperado, but not a man afraid.

Since both versions of line three of the "Jesse James stanza" contain the words "...little children standing will embrace" it was probably written that way for purposes of rhythm and meter. The word "standing" is out of place, and the substitution of "round her" or something similar, would seem more appropriate.

The song may possibly be dated by the declaration that they would, in Chestnut's verse five, "...labor.... until death." This indicates Day probably composed the ballad prior to the circa 1914-1915 pardon of White and Jett.

Because the Mac and Bob version is the more complete textually, it will be discussed first. Their song, as shown above, contained ten very accurate stanzas. Accompanied by mandolin, harmonica, and guitar, the two sang in the close-harmony duet style so strongly identified with them. The tempo was faster than on most of their material, but was necessary in order to incorporate all the words. Both men were Kentuckians whose repertoire consisted mainly of religious and old-time ballad items. Their "Markham" (so misspelled on the record label) combined both of these elements. Although correctly detailed in the main, a couple of oddities so appear in their work. The most notable is the naming of "Captain Hewitt" rather than Captain Ewen in verse five, line one; in the previous verse, the pronouncing of the Judge's name as "Har-kiss" is also evident. Possibly, too, they may have learned the piece some years earlier, and, in recalling it, got the names slightly wrong. In verse five, line four, the singular-plural rule gets broken, obviously for rhyming purposes in "When he saw the men had gun." Actually, too, only Jett was threatening with a weapon. In the fourth line of verse seven the word "contented" is mistakenly used for "contended."

Again, these are only minor mistakes, and in no way detract from an outstanding performance. The tempo and fluidity of the Mac and Bob version displays a strongly traditional and rural root,



Upper left: Reproduced from contemporary newspaper account; upper right: The Marcum home as it looked a couple years ago; below: Gravestones of Dr. Cox and J. B. Marcum. All photos by the author.

slightly but surely touched by the evolution of the early country musician toward a more widely acceptable style. The pauses between verses are "filled in" by chordal tremolos on the mandolin, framed by guitar and harmonica backing. These brief instrumental breaks display a polished though not overrehearsed technique.

Ted Chestnut and company, also Kentuckians, present a style and delivery almost completely opposite to that of Mac and Bob. The song is sung in the high and mournful balladeer's tone, and, although guitar and violin are present, the aura of an unaccompanied singer is almost evident. Save for the difference in voice quality, this version must sound remarkably like the Bill Day performances in Morehead. Although Chestnut was credited as vocalist, the song was actually sung by his companion, Asa Martin, who learned the ballad directly from Blind Bill Day. Slow and deliberate in purpose, Martin has time for only five verses. The first four are, excepting syntax changes, very similar to Mac and Bob's, though the ordering is different. The final verse, not performed at all on the Brunswick record, is possibly as rural and archaic in content as any in the song. The last line, "Until death shall come and take them both away," has the indelible imprint of unyielding finality... fatalistic, absolute, and only right; a capsulized concept of the mountain philosophy on tragedy and its aftermath.

It is interesting to note that Martin names both White and Jett, but deletes mention of Hargis and Callahan from his ballad. He only vaguely alludes to them in verse three, line six as, "Thomas White and others yet." Whether they went unheralded by him entirely because of lack of recording space, or because, living in relatively close proximity to the feudal ground, as he did, Martin was acquainted with friends or kinsmen of the former Breathitt leaders, whom he did not wish to injure or embarrass, is speculative.

The Gennett recording gives composer credit to Day, while the Brunswick label describes the ballad as "Traditional." It is likely that the Brunswick people or Mac and Bob, or both, were unaware of Bill Day's authorship of the song, and this was why he was not acknowledged on the label. Very often Brunswick did give proper credits on old songs, prompting the conclusion that in the case of "J. B. Markham" those involved in the production were simply told it was an "old song."

Though no sales figures are available for the Mac and Bob disc, they are for the Chestnut/Martin/Roberts releases, thanks to Doc Roberts himself. The figures indicate that both releases were poor sellers: the Gennett disc sold 722 copies, the Champion release, 1068. In the latter case, this was scarcely one fifth of what that group's other Champion releases averaged. Both the Champion and the Gennett discs seem to have been withdrawn from circulation within about a year after release; at any rate, no sales were reported after that.

In addition to the two recordings discussed in detail above, three others have been issued: pop singer Johnny Mercer, "Murder of J. B. Markham," recorded in 1937 and released on Brunswick 8011, Harmony 1010, and Vocalion 578; folk revivalist Fleming Brown, "J.B. Markham," issued on Folk Legacy FSI-1 in 1962; and traditional singer Doc Hopkins, "J. B. Marcum," recorded in 1965 and released on Birch LP 1945.

G. Malcolm Laws, in his syllabus, Native American Balladry (Philadelphia: 1964), gives references to seven other published or recorded traditional versions (p. 185); to these can be added a text from Virginia cited by Rosenberg in The Folksongs of Virginia: A Checklist of the WPA Holdings (Charlottesville: 1969; p. 57).

It is strange to report that Day, who later recovered his sight, and recorded ten fiddle solos in New York City (under the name Jilson Setters) on February 27, 1928, did not perform "The Death of J. B. Marcum."

The Murder of J. B. Markham (Traditional)

By Lester McFarland & Robert A. Gardner, rec. 14 Aug 1928 in N.Y. (master E28066); Brunswick 305.

It was on the fourth of May,
Half past eight o'clock that day,
J. B. Marcum was standing in the door;
Of a Courthouse in his town,
Where Curt Jett was lurking 'round,
Just to get a chance to lay him on the floor.

Thomas White, a friend of Jett,
 No worse man was ever met,
 Then came walking boldly through the Courthouse hall;
 And as he was passing by,
 He looked Marcum in the eye,
 Knowing truly well poor Marcum soon would fall.

White walked out upon the street,
 Stopped to see it all complete,
 For he expected soon to hear the fatal shot;
 Jett advanced across the hall,
 With his pistol, lead, and ball,
 And he killed poor J. B. Marcum on the spot.

Judge Jim Hargis and his man,
 Sheriff Edward Callahan,
 Were across the street in Hargis Brothers' Store;
 Some believed they knew the plot,
 Hence were listening for the shot,
 And to see Jett's victim fall there in the door.

Captain Hewitt standing by,
 Saw him fall and heard him cry,
 'O, Lord, O, Lord, they've killed me now at last';
 When he saw the men had gun,
 Then he hastily did run,
 When he heard a second loud and awful blast.

They arrested White and Jett,
 And the courts in Jackson met,
 Where the prosecution labored with its might;
 Judge Redwine could do no more,
 So he left it with the jury for the right.

Now the jury disagreed,
 Just one man began to plead,
 That he thought Curt Jett and White should both go free;
 He contented to the last,
 That his vote he would not cast,
 Some believe Judge Hargis paid the man a fee.

Now they tried these men once more,
 Not in Jackson as before,
 For they could not get their justice in that town;
 So the courts in Harrison met,
 And condemned both White and Jett,
 And a verdict of their guiltiness was found.

Now their Mothers grieve today,
 For their boys while they're away,
 For there's nothing that can sever a Mother's love;
 She will pray for them each breath,
 Cling to them until death,
 And will hope to meet them in the courts above.

Marcum leaves a wife,
 To mourn all her life,
 The little children standing will embrace;
 But that little Curtis Jett,
 Thomas White and others yet,
 Are the men who laid poor Marcum in his grave.

The Death of J. B. Marcum
(Day)

By Ted Chestnut & Asa Martin, rec. 10 May 1928 in Richmond,,Ind. (Starr master GE 13801), released on Gennett 6513 and Champion 15544 (as by Cal Turner).

It was on the fourth of May,
Half past eight o'clock that day,
J. B. Marcum then was standing in the door;
Of the Courthouse of his town,
Where Curt Jett was lurking 'round,
Just to get a chance to lay him on the floor.

Thomas White, a friend of Jett,
No worse man was ever met,
Then came walking boldly through the Courthouse hall;
And as he was passing by,
He looked Marcum in the eye,
Knowing truly that poor Marcum soon would die.

Marcum leaves a wife,
To mourn all her life,
And his little children standing will embrace;
But that little Curtis Jett,
Thomas White and others yet,
Are the men who laid poor Marcum in his grave.

White then walked out on the street,
Stopped to see it all complete,
He expected soon to hear the fatal shot;
Jett advanced through the hall,
With a pistol, lead, and ball,
And he killed poor J. B. Marcum on the spot.

Now the final trial is passed,
Jett and White are doomed at last,
To the prison house where they will have to stay;
And with those of other crimes,
They must labor all the time,
Until death shall come and take them both away.

* * * * *

NEW JEMF PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

We are pleased to announce the availability of three new JEMF publications. *GENNETT RECORDS OF OLD TIME TUNES: A CATALOG REPRINT* is Number 6 in our Special Series. This publication consists of a facsimile reproduction of a rare 1928 Gennett Old Time Tunes catalog (20 pages), which includes photographs of such popular Gennett hillbilly artists as David Miller, Taylor's Kentucky Boys, Chubby Parker, Dock Roberts, Holland Puckett, and Walter Peterson. An Introduction by John MacKenzie discusses this Gennett catalog in its social and historical perspective. The price is \$1.50 to members of the Friends of the JEMF; \$2.00 to all others.

MOLLY O'DAY, LYNN DAVIS AND THE CUMBERLAND MOUNTAIN FOLKS, by Ivan Tribe and John Morris, is Number 7 in the Special Series. This 48-page 7x10" booklet includes biographies of Molly O'Day, her husband, Lynn Davis, and most of the other important artists who appeared with them throughout their career. A 12-page center section consists of photographs, many not previously published. A complete discography, list of contents of song folios, and bibliography are also included. The price is \$3.00 to members of the Friends; \$4.00 to all others.

Number 32 in our Reprint Series is Linda C. Burman-Hall's article, "Southern American Folk Fiddling styles," reprinted from *Ethnomusicology*, 19 (Jan 1975). [See Bibliographic Notes section in this *JEMFQ* for a brief review.] Price to members of the Friends is 50¢; \$1.00 to all others.

THE NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION

Folk culture today is presented to large society in diverse forms: book, record, film, concert, festival. As expressive material moves away from its original creators, a number of mediating institutions--educational and commercial--arise to deal with the flow of this folk substance. Some of these institutions are the publishing industry, music business, tourism, public art agencies, and schools. We illustrate how a folk expression becomes an institutional property when asserting that songs are packaged in books or discs and are sold as straight market products, no different from tires or toothbrushes. Physical objects actually produced by folk craftsmen, such as toys or pottery, are also sold directly at nondescript highway stands or in elegant museum shops.

Obviously, it is more difficult to merchandise folk dance or drama than Appalachian quilts. Either a group of performers must trek "uptown" or tourists must go "downtown" to see the folk perform in its own setting. This latter trip, literally, can be to distant hills or it can be just across the tracks to an immigrant neighborhood enclaved in a metropolis. An impersonal clerk in a supermarket may sell an LP disc; a travel agent may sell a plane ticket to a vacation spot rich in "native" ritual. The clerk may be passive about the contents of the recording; the agent is likely to know something of culture "on the reservation" or in the "boondocks."

Within this century the American folk festival has developed as an educational/commercial institution whose purpose it is to demonstrate/sell folk culture to new or strange audiences. Festival promoters and planners range from scholars with deep commitment to the integrity of folklore all the way to hustlers insensitive to values in folk society. I perceive festival promoters as persons combining the attributes of travel agents, teachers, and ballyhoo artists. If these skills are well put together, the promoter will succeed in bringing large numbers of outsiders into some kind of interaction with folk creators. It can be taken for granted that most readers of *JEMFQ* who have attended folk or bluegrass festivals have also witnessed or participated in this interaction.

I have been struck by the incredible fact that there is no single historical or analytical

book on folk festivals as institutions of social mediation. Nor is there even a handful of decent articles on this subject in available journals. Festivals generate tremendous publicity, much of it as posters, program books, brochures, flyers, picture kits for newspapers, and press releases. Despite this mass of information, little of it seems to be digested and re-presented in lasting form. In this graphics feature I shall duplicate an undramatic but important program book from the National Folk Festival Association's second annual event. (Never having seen a copy of the first booklet, I use the second.) In commenting on the NFFA's publication, I shall also detail a bit of the Association's history, and shall add to my overview a few thoughts on NFFA strengths and weaknesses.

To write about the NFFA is to portray Sarah Gertrude Knott, now retired at Princeton, Kentucky, where she is writing her autobiography. Here, I begin with her college years in the 1920s at the University of North Carolina. Studying with Frederick Koch, she became a member of The Carolina Playmakers, a group of campus actors and writers staging regional folk dramas. The term "folk drama" used by Koch and his students meant new scripts about the folk rather than traditional forms such as British mummers plays (for example, "Saint George and the Turk") or Mexican religious plays (Los Pastores).

In 1929 Miss Knott took a professional position in St. Louis as director of the Dramatic League and founder of the Strolling Players. Through the early depression years she worked with unemployed Negro groups in presenting dramatic skits, using their own experiences, and employing their impromptu old-time singing. As a recreation worker in a polyglot city, she also encountered many immigrants from Europe, and learned something of their traditions. During April 29-May 2, 1934, she put together her first folk festival in St. Louis' Municipal Auditorium, involving about 300 participants from 14 states. The *Post-Dispatch* lauded her achievement editorially and reported it fully.

I have never read a clear account of the models Miss Knott held in mind when planning her first festival. For example, why did she label it "folk" rather than call it a festival of nationalities or relate it to an historical event?

The festival cost \$13,000, contributed by "top citizens" in St. Louis. How did she raise this huge sum for a folk enterprise? Nor do I know the names of the folklorists who helped shape her ideas. She may have followed the lead of Bascom Lamar Lunsford who established his Asheville, North Carolina, Mountain Dance and Folk Festival in 1928. The year before he had presented a music and dance program during the Rhododendron Festival which led to his own gathering. (Am I right in assuming that Lunsford was the first American actually to use the term "folk festival," naming a specific gathering of dancers and musicians in a celebratory setting?)

In November 1935, Ben Botkin invited Miss Knott to a University of Oklahoma Symposium on Higher Education and Society, where she read a paper on "Art and the Audience." In various notes for subsequent program booklets or NFFA reports, Botkin has drawn on Miss Knott's early paper to suggest her major frames of reference: 1) The healthy reaction by some social workers in favor of cultural diversity against the Americanization "myth" of the melting pot; 2) The belief of some activists that folklore, both substance and study, was a potential tool in building grassroots participation in democratic society. These concepts were enacted rather than formally articulated at St. Louis by the presentational mix of Kiowa Indians (Oklahoma), French maskers from St. Genevieve (Missouri), New England balladeers, Ozark and Blue Ridge Mountain dancers, Michigan lumberjacks, former clipper ship chanteymen, spiritual choruses, etc. Hopefully, we shall secure for later reproduction some graphics from this pioneer NFFA festival.

In the absence of a formal history of the NFFA, as well as the lack of the St. Louis program book, we can use the Post-Dispatch (Available on microfilm) to touch a few highlights of the first NFFA festival. The cast of performers and collectors was impressive and varied; I cited only a few: Mary Austin--New Mexico, J. Frank Dobie--Texas, Helen Harkness Flanders--Vermont, Zora Hurston--Florida, George Pullen Jackson--Tennessee, Jilson Setters--Kentucky. Our present word for festival seminars is "workshops." Miss Knott in 1934 termed these as "educational programs." The Russell Sage Foundation brought 750 examples of handicrafts to the Kiel Municipal Auditorium, many from mountain colleges. While some students demonstrated weaving, carving, and similar skills, other students in the Carolina Playmakers offered three folk dramas--"Quare Medicine," "On Dixon's Porch," and "Job's Kinfolk," a then-current play on textile mill life in Winston-Salem.

Post-Dispatch reporter Fay Profilet wrote an excellent background article about Constance Rourke and Professor E. C. Beck gathering Michigan lumberjack ballads from old-timers who had

been invited to St. Louis. Not only did Ms. Profilet discuss songs and setting, but her interview with Ms. Rourke was sensitive to the role of collectors in revitalizing a tradition. An unnamed reporter also interviewed Cap'n Dick Maitland, a retired clipper ship master and chanteyman, then living at Sailor's Snug Harbor in New York. This story also commented pointedly on Maitland and his mates watching unfamiliar Ozark square dancers from the wings of the auditorium stage. Anyone who has helped produce a folk festival has wondered at times about the consequences of the internal interaction between performers. Do festivals themselves alter styles and repertoires? Many of the Post-Dispatch stories used photographs: I cite seven key references: 26 April 1934, page 3C and 3D; 29 April, 11A; 30 April, 2C and 3C; 1 May, 3C; 2 May, 3C.

Miss Knott's second festival occurred in Chattanooga on 14-18 May 1935, and the full program is reproduced here (actual page size 6" x 9", black on white). The booklet is immensely valuable in that it details the balance achieved between English and non-English language material as well as between music and dance. The final element in the festival, handicrafts, is touched upon very briefly, almost as a footnote at the program's end. (In subsequent years this portion on crafts' publicity was expanded.) I am fascinated in studying the Chattanooga program by the roll call of participants, ranging from anthracite coal miners deeply steeped in a specialized occupation tradition to drama students from the then-experimental and liberal Black Mountain College.

Not only was Miss Knott's net cast wide in gathering performers but also in inviting collectors; among them were Arthur Campa, George Korson, Romaine Lowdermilk, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, May Kennedy McCord, Jean Thomas, and William Troxell. Although Miss Knott had not yet incorporated her Association in 1935, she had already persuaded various celebrities to lend their names to her enterprise. The Festival's president and vice-president were Paul Green, the North Carolina playwright, and Constance Rourke, a perceptive critic of American culture.

A special detail which interests me personally is the inclusion on the program of railroad gang work songs by young men from the Booker T. Washington Civilian Conservation Corps Camp at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. It was at a Klamath River CCC Camp in 1940 that I encountered at first-hand native American Indian and western frontier customs. I suspect that other readers will find similar program listings exciting or puzzling. What was Fred Colby's role in bringing an Agricultural Adjustment Administration group from rural Tennessee? How many New Deal agencies were involved in the application

cation of folklore on the festival scene?

The Knott presentational formula (many languages, ethnic pluralism, music, dance, drama, crafts) worked out at St. Louis and Chattanooga has lasted until this day. Accordingly, I shall not comment on the specific contents of all 36 NFFA festivals. Rather, I shall append below a list and location guide for these events. The glossy print of Sarah Gertrude Knott in this feature is undated. I believe that it was originally used for newspaper publicity purposes, but have no clear citation to such use. I am in the favor of Leo Bernache, Betty Braymer, and Andy Wallace (of the current NFFA staff) for their generosity in providing the photo as well as the Chattanooga booklet.

Here I shall note a few problems raised by Miss Knott and by some of her colleagues. At the end of World War II, she wrote "The National Folk Festival after Twelve Years" for the California Folklore Quarterly, V (1946) 83-93. Her article contrasted the reactionary and anti-quarian uses of folklore, placing scholars who did not "believe in folk festivals of any kind" in the latter category. It seemed beyond question to her that these festivals helped to "eradicate racial and nationalistic prejudices" and to build "strong national unity." Her rhetoric was like that of other patriotic Americans in the War years, although she seemed to avoid the radical political associations of some folklorists engaged in New Deal projects. She did not identify herself politically yet she saw folklore essentially in didactic terms. I cite her usage of the term "folk festival movement" and her self categorization, "those of us who led the movement" (84). I suspect that her usage of this word stemmed from the early commitment of British collectors and composers (Cecil Sharp, Ralph Vaughan Williams) to the folksong revival as part of the English romantic/nationalistic movement.

In esthetic terms Miss Knott was neither a purist, nor governed by any consistent conceptual notion of folklore. She knew that a festival based only on deep tradition would not make money, and her quest for funding was constant from philanthropists, newspapers, chambers of commerce, and civic agencies. In her 1946 article she noted that at her festivals she had used "survival" and "revival" performers as well as those who made "arrangements based on folk themes." To gain perspective on her formulation "arrangements" we must note that she accepted this notion long before the Kingston Trio, Joan Baez, or Bob Dylan became pop culture figures. Actually, Miss Knott did not "cotton to" commercially successful performers of folksong. Rather, she preferred her "arrangers" to perform at festivals without fee. She was not entirely comfortable with successful artists from the recording studio or concert

circuit; instead she drew talent largely from campus dramatic troupes, square dance clubs, YMCA-YWCA's, civic recreation units, settlement houses, and genteel hobbyists in family circles.

When the folk boom and hootennany craze swept the country in the 1950s-1960s, Miss Knott asserted her special loyalty to "the real thing." Her article, "Many Songs, Many Dances," appeared in Americas, XVII (February 1965) 27-33, the magazine of the Pan American Union. In it she stated: "The commercial entertainment industry capitalized on this development [folk-song revival] with its own brand of pseudo folk singing and make-believe folk song, usually a poor counterpart and often a burlesque of the real thing. These commercial products... often create an entirely false image of genuine folklore...."

I am fully aware that the task of sorting out "genuine folklore," as well as that of defining ethnographic and esthetic norms within commercial festivals is immensely complicated and beyond the scope of this commentary. The best statement by Miss Knott on festival philosophy is her article, "Folksongs and Dances, U.S.A.: The Changing Scene," Southern Folklore Quarterly, XXV (1961) 184-194. There she took a middle ground position between rigid purists and for-fun-only practitioners. For festival planners who wish to pursue this problem, I can recommend three succinct notes by sensitive observers at NFFA events in the Journal of American Folklore: Lillian Wright, XLVII (1934) 262-263; Martha Beckwith, LI (1938) 442-443; Albert Muntzsch, LXII (1949) 319-320.

When Sarah Gertrude Knott retired in 1971, the NFFA was kept alive largely by federal grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Park Service. How was this subsidy justified? It seems to me that we need serious attention in JEMFQ (and sister journals) to the interrelated web of private and governmental support to folk art. If my thesis holds that the festival is a mediating institution between folk and large society, we need a critical look at its role. What else do we purchase when we buy a ticket at the gate? On a festival platform folk artists display their creativity to new audiences; on the festival grounds audience members display their behavior to the invited performers. At best, the planner-promoters provide rational structures of interpretation for the two sets of participants. At worst, the festival permits sophisticated persons to patronize quaint traits in others, and, conversely, it deepens the sense of alienation held by some members of folk society. Ideally, a festival should bring discrete sets of people together at a level of mutuality.

PROGRAM

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Second

National Folk Festival

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Memorial Auditorium

May 14 to 18, 1935

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CHATTANOOGA
TENNESSEE

•

*This program is dedicated to the memory of Mary Austin, whose
guiding hand helped most in laying the foundation
upon which our program has been built.*



TUESDAY, MAY 14

2:15 p.m.

INDIAN DANCES AND MUSIC

Presented by the Kiowa Indians, Monroe Tsa-to-ke, Stephen Mopape, Spencer Asah, James Auchiash, Gregory Humpy, Joe Attockie, Justin Pooloo, Timothy Berry, O. B. Jacobson, Director of the School of Art, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla.

Kiowa Snake Dance—The Troupe.

Shield Dance—Duet, Mopope and Asah; Chorus, Tsa-to-ke and Auchiash.
Chant, "Kiowa Love Song"—Solo by Tsa-to-ke.

Gourd Dance—The Troupe.

The Kiowas' magically colorful dances, songs and paintings illustrate traditions of this pure-blooded race, preserved since before the coming of the white man. They have tenaciously preserved their tribal identity, rites and ceremonies. Art galleries of Paris, London and America have exhibited their paintings, which capture the charm and color and line in their dances.

FIXIN'S — By Paul Green

*Presented by Black Mountain College, Black Mountain, North Carolina.
W. R. Wimsch, Director.*

Scene: Cabin home in the North Carolina hills.

Cast:
Jim Cooper.....Norman Weston Ed Robinson.....Jack French
Lillie Robinson.....Nan Chapin Weston

A new people's theatre in the making! Again a theatre of the folk, of fresh dramatic forms, in terms of our own day's life; a theatre of a new social order of a new earth and a new heaven of a thousand American scenes! Fredrick Koch.

SPANISH FOLK SONGS

Presented by male quartet—Juanito Sandoval, Ruben Cobas, A. T. Chavez and Ben Moya. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Arthur L. Canha, Director of Research, Director.

Mi Runcho Benito La Paloma que volo El Zapatero
La Kieiera Las Manantias El Viejo Amor
La Paloma El Vendadito

This group of Spanish folk songs represents traditional examples from the sixteenth century to the present day, giving the various types of rhythm and melodies characteristic of Spanish music.—Arthur L. Canha.

FOLK SONGS OF OLD VINCENTNES

Presented by Mrs. J. Caney, Vincennes, Indiana. The first song was sung by the women who served food to George Rogers Clark's army when Vincennes was captured from the British in the early eighteenth century.

Il faut aller en guerre
C'est la bas dans la prairie
Mon pere n'avait fille que moi.

Songs of French pioneers, who in 1702 reached the banks of the Onebasche, led by Juchereau de St. Denis and Father Marmet, who established the old trading post where thirty years later Fort Vincennes was established.

They added to their store of folk songs, learned by rote, those brought to them by missionaries and traders, and handed them down to their descendants.—Cecilia Berry.

NEGRO SPIRITUALS

Presented by children from Binny Oaks School, Chattanooga. B. Cortez Tipton, Director.

I Gotta Rohe Wheel in a Wheel
Trampin' Trampin' Shout Together Children
Every Time I Feel de Spirit

TUESDAY, MAY 14

8:15 p. m.

INDIAN DANCES AND MUSIC

Presented by the Kiowa Indians. See Tuesday afternoon

SPANISH MUSIC

Presented by male quartet from the University of New Mexico. See Tuesday afternoon.

La Golondrina La Indita La Endredader
Adelita El Rancho Hermosas Fuentes
San Isidro San Marcial Las Gaviotas
El Alba La Cucaracha El Cielito Lindo

OLD FRENCH SONGS

Presented by Mrs. J. Caney, Vincennes, Indiana. See Tuesday afternoon

FIXIN'S — By Paul Green

Presented by Black Mountain College, Black Mountain, North Carolina. See Tuesday afternoon.

NEGRO SPIRITUALS

Presented by Negro Chorus of 1,000 voices from Chattanooga. David Collins, Director.

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot I Know the Lord Laid His Hands
I Am Climbing Jacob's Ladder on Me
Go Tell It on the Mountain Lord, I Want to Be a Christian
I Want to Be Ready Great Camp Meeting
Steal Away Witness
Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray

LINING HYMNS

W. N. Bynum, Leader.

It is a well known fact that humanity is most prayerful in the hour of need. Religion comes then as the reverberation of a great cry of the soul. This explains in brief the Negro Spiritual, which more than almost any other folk-music in the world is a great cry of the soul whose burden is of age-old promises of eternal freedom, of feasts of milk and honey, and of the divine glory of a love all-inclusive.—R. Nathaniel Dett.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

2:15 p.m.

THE WHIPPOORWILL

Written and directed by Orrelle Fidler Cornelius. Presented by The University Players, University of Chattanooga.

Scene: The living room of the Vaughn's cabin home in the mountains of East Tennessee.

CAST

Ezry Vaughn, an old mountaineer, whose hatred of his enemies is exceeded only by the love of his children... George C. Knox
Sally Vaughn, his wife and frequent boss... Katherine Fryor
Fanny, their daughter and the pride of Ezry's heart... Mary Alice Witt
Buddy, their "ruined" young'un... Jean Aston
Dave Hill, a young mountaineer... Charles C. Lusk, Jr.

LUMBERJACK MUSIC AND DANCES

Presented by Michigan lumberjacks, assembled at Alma and Grand Rapids, Michigan. Sponsored by Michigan Tourist and Resort Association. H. S. Babcock, leader.

Wilson's Clog
Princess Quadrille
Opera Reel
One More Lumbering Go
Jam on Gerry's Rocks
Little Brown Bulls
Bonny Hoffmeyer, violin; Arthur Mulford, dulcimer; H. S. Babcock, Arthur Ballinger, Harry Blackman, Kenneth Ellsworth, Samuel Hackett, Frank Hufford, Carl Latrop, Robert Loomis, Leon May, Perry Allen, William McBride, L. M. Converse, William Harrison, Clare McLean, William Rogers.

THE SACRED HARP MUSIC

Presented by singers from Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia. These songs are selected from the Sacred Harp book, compiled by Major Benjamin F. White in 1877. A. J. Wooten, chairman, George Bobo, Bud Dean, Henry Stallings, Tom Wooten, vice-chairmen.

Bound for Canaan
New Britain
Lenox
Northfield
Cornfield Songs.
Mountain Music and Dances. Presented by Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee. Earl Hobson Smith, Director.
String Music. John Rutherford, Jr., Carl Greer, Wilbur Estis, Habern Owens.
Sun-Up and Sun-Down Calls. Tom Wooten, Chattanooga.
Folk Dances. Bill McHenry, Eunice Evans, Robert Selfe, Madge Baker.

OZARK FOLKLORE

Presented by Ozark Mountain people. Mrs. May Kennedy, McCord, of Springfield, Missouri, in charge. Mrs. Carl Mueller and Homer Coffman, general chairmen.

Square Dances. Springfield Community Dancers. Otis Maxey, leader.
Fiddle Tune—Eight of January.

Bunjo. John Mathis, Rolla—Sally Goodin'.
Al Lafour, Rolla—Arkansas Traveler.
Family Ballad Singers. J. C. Wilson and Family—The Jealous Lover, Bolivar, Missouri.

Harmonica. Glenn Robb—Lost Train Blues.
Carl Haden—Fox Chase.

Ballad. David Rice—The House Carpenter (Child 243)
A. E. Jester—The Drunken Hiccoughs, Aurora, Missouri.
George Rock—Jesse James, Springfield, Missouri.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

8:15 p.m.

THE WHIPPOORWILL

Written and directed by Orrelle Fidler Cornelius. See Wednesday afternoon.

LUMBERJACK MUSIC AND DANCES

Presented by Michigan lumberjacks. See Wednesday afternoon.
Michigan Girl
Fiat River Girl
Pine River Triple, 1 and 2
The Old Gray Mare
Irish Washerwoman
Miss McCloud's Reel
Buffalo Girls
Never Take the Horseshoe from the Door

NEGRO GAMES

Presented by Girl Reserves of Phyllis Wheatley Branch Y. W. C. A. under direction of Mrs. C. B. Tadley, assisted by Misses Bobo and Howes.

Cotton Needs Pickin'
Grandfather's Dead
Miss Due from Alabama
Go In and Out the Window
Work Songs and Games. Presented by special group under the direction of Mrs. Gertrude Blanton and Charlie Nichols.
Charleston, Corn Shuckin', Cake Walk.

Work Songs. Presented by boys from the Booker T. Washington C.C.C. Camp at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. B. Z. Spaulding, Educational Director.

John Henry—Charles Hackett, Nashville, Tennessee.
Po' Lazarus—Robert Harris, Lobelle Cushman, Leon Coulter and Alex Carter.

These songs were learned while working with Southern railroad gangs.

Buck Dance. Samuel Holmes.
Mandolin. H. J. Barclay.

OZARK FOLKLORE

Presented by Ozark Mountain people. See Wednesday afternoon.

Family Ballad Singers. Wallace Sisters: Rosewood Casket, Pauline, Dione Wallace, Ava, Missouri.

Ballad. Junior Haworth, The Orphan Child, Springfield, Missouri.
Band. Harry Kirgen, James and John Wood, St. James, Missouri.

THURSDAY, MAY 16

2:15 p.m.

MOUNTAIN MUSIC AND DANCES

Presented by people from various sections of Tennessee. Mrs. H. E. Beadle, Crossville, chairman; Prof. J. A. Rickard, Cookeville, chairman; James Davenport, Soddy, chairman; Will Randolph, Birchwood, chairman; George Forbes, Chulainooga, chairman.

Singing Games—Pop Goes the Weasel—Old Betty Liner.

Cumberland County High School, Mrs. W. T. Howard, Crossville, director.

Ballads—Lord Lovell (Child 75)—Cumberland County High School, Mrs. Howard, leader.

Banjo—Free a Little Bird; Black-Eyed Susan—Cal Farris, Panama, Tenn. *Community Square Dance Group*—Right Hand Across—Marshall Houston, Robbins, Tennessee, leader.

Ballad—The Blind Child.

Cookeville String Band—Prof. J. A. Rickard, P. T. I., leader.

Clog Dancing—T. L. Cunningham, Smithson, Tennessee.

Square Dance—Ocean Wave—Nashville Square Dance Group.

Singing Games—

Shoot the Buffalo	Jolly Is the Miller	Straight Through the
Across the Hall	Boy	Door
Four-Leaf Clover	Waves of Tory	

Agricultural Adjustment Administration Group. Fred W. Colby, leader.

SEA CHANTEYS

Presented by the Jibboom Club Chanty Singers, Whaling City, New London, Connecticut. Leo B. Reagan, Director. Chanty Crew: Edward Neilan, Richard Bonventi, John F. Broonan, Henry McIninch, Leo B. Reagan, Chantey-Man.

Sacramento	Fire	Pumping
Dead Hoss, Long Haul (runaway)	Blow the Man Down	Long Haul
Blow Ye Winds... Whaling Song	Can't You Dance the Polka...	
Seaman's Alphabet... Foe'sil Song		Long Haul

Chanteys, the work songs of the sea, were sung by the sailors on sailing vessels while doing manual labor. They were divided into two classes—the long haul and the short haul. The long haul is divided into two types: (1) Capstan and Pumping; (2) Hauling—Leo B. Reagan.

FOLK SONG

I Love Little Willie — Mary Beadle.

COWBOY MUSIC AND BALLADS

Presented by Romaine Lowdermilk, Soda Springs Ranch, Rimrock, Ariz.

The Old Chisholm Trail	The Cowboy's Lament	Jake and Roany
The Old Black Steer	Threwed	Jessie James
Goodbye Old Paint, I'm	Home on the Range	Jack o' Diamonds
Leaving Cheyenne	Arizona	Trail to Mexico
Billy Venero	Billy the Kid	Git Along Dogies

The songs of the cowboys have been formed through repetition and the adding of a verse now and then by numerous unknown singers until the completed song is usually the product of several cowboys. Often they are known under different names in different districts in the cow-country, and are sung to various tunes. Some of the songs are epic in that they like "Billy Venero," portray in song a crisis in the hero's life, and extol his fortitude in meeting it. Most of the Cowboy songs originated in the Southwest—Romaine Lowdermilk.

THURSDAY, MAY 16

8:15 p.m.

MOUNTAIN MUSIC AND DANCES

Presented by Agricultural Adjustment Association, Nashville. See Thursday afternoon.

Singing Games.

Fiddle Tunes—Irish Washerwoman—R. R. Dunbar, Crossville.

Sally in the Garden—Frank Stanley, Pleasant Hill.

Pop Goes the Weasel—L. C. Keith, Crossville.

Billy in the Lowground—J. A. Pendergass, Birchwood.

The Jew's Harp—Eighth of January—G. B. Sisco, Crossville.

Black-Eyed Susan—Bill Dixon, Birchwood.

Harmonica—The Fox Chase—L. C. Keith, Crossville; Bill Dixon, Birchwood; Barbara Allen and Ben Pointer, Crossville.

Ballad—Little Rosewood Casket—Ruby and Oliver Hughes, Panama.

The Stanley String Band—Turkey in the Straw—Ray Phillips, Dallas Hughes, L. C. Keith, Crossville.

Clog Dance—Ernest Watt, Crossville; Hettie Ruth Sims and Marjorie Dean Randolph, Birchwood.

Harmonica and Guitar—Shortening Bread and Cackling Hen—Clyde Brown, Clyde Cope, Ben Pointer, Pleasant Hill Academy.

Banjo—Cripple Creek—Frank Stanley, Pleasant Hill.

Square Dance—Ocean Wave—Roselyn Branham Group, Soddy, Tennessee; Roslyn Branham, leader.

Milton Bryant String Band—Soldier's Joy, Soddy, Tennessee.

Clog Dance—Marvin Edmondson, Soddy, Tennessee.

Birchwood Square Dance Group—Grapevine, M. L. Sims, leader.

Birchwood String Band—John Allison, leader.

Square Dance—Soddy Community Dancers—Right Hand Across—Jack Jenkins, leader.

Square Dance—Sale Creek Alumni, Figure Eight—Grover Jones, caller.

Cowboy Music and Ballads. Presented by Romaine Lowdermilk. See Thursday afternoon.

Sailors' Sea Chantey. Presented by the Jibboom Club. See Thursday afternoon.

FRIDAY, MAY 17

2:15 p.m.

THE PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN FOLKLORE

Presented by Pennsylvania-German people under the direction of William S. Traxell, Allentown, Pa., and George W. Karsan, General Chairman and Director of the Pennsylvania Folk Festival.

The Old Squire's Birthday Party. This number represents a typical scene in a Pennsylvania-German home a half century ago. The superstitions, folk songs, play-party games, and authentic Pennsylvania-German folklore are woven into this sketch.

Folk Songs—Shippin, shippin, my lievie Dochter (Spin, spin, my dear daughter)

Folk Customs—Reida, reida, goulie (Ride, ride, horsey).

Lullaby—Shlofe, Bublie, Shlofe (Sleep, Baby, Sleep).

Superstition—S Kummert helft, won shunst nix (The horse collar will help it nothing else will. An old superstition of passing a child through a horse-collar for relief when liver grown.)

Finger Game—Finger Tzaia (Counting fingers).

Playing Games—Woh is don die Mary? (Where is Mary?)

Dadler Rolla (Spin the plate.)

Wie g'falds d'r? (How do you like it?)

Bond Messa. (Measuring ribbon.)

Miska Flaisia. (Swatting flies.)

Schpeck Schneida. (Cutting bacon.)

Shvum Bawda. (Wading in the meadow.)

Kofme Maala. (Grinding coffee.)

Ballads—

Ei Du!h Tsushond

Des Biedlich Mamlie

Dibbe Ribbie Die

Dart drwawa Dart drwawa

Die and die Shvum d'im Wosser

Ballad and Dance.

Square Dances.

CAST: William S. Troxell, Paul Wienand, Mabel Wicand, Margaret Ritter and Ernest Stephens, Frank and Sallie Forgan, George and Bessie Haas, Mountain DeLong, Audra Miller, Ray Ritter, William Allen and Anna Gensler, Ed and Margurite Huff, Joseph and Esther Cuth, Allen and Shlome Stephens, Charles and Mary Masters, Marvin Wetzel, Hilda Roth, Allica Burkhardt, Lillie Stryker, Alma Fosenacht, Harvey Krauss, Francis Roth, Thomas Daniels, Austin Masterters, Lottie Strauss, Helen Rathburn, Ed Johnson, William Lutz, Morris Schmale, Simon Sells, Clifford Wetzel, John Dreher.

MOUNTAIN MUSIC AND BALLADS

American Folk Song Society, Director.

Presented by Kentucky mountain people. Jean Thomas, Founder of

BALLADS AND FOLK SONGS

Lovely Nancy; Salt, Salt Sea; Damon's Winder; Clinch Mountain; Lone-tucky; Jilson Settlers, The Singing Fiddler of Lost Hope Hollow, Kentucky.

FIDDLE TUNES AND BALLADS

Kentucky Mountain People.

Three years ago Miss Thomas took Jilson Settlers to London, England, to participate in the English Folk Festival, held in Albert Hall. The "Singing Fiddler" took back to England the language and the balladry of the Elizabethan

days, which his ancestors had brought to this country several hundred years ago. Records of these Kentucky Mountain people were made last year, and presented to the Library of Congress.

SINGING GAMES

Miller Boy—Soddy High School, Raymond Fortner, leader.

SQUARE DANCES

Presented by winners in Broad Street Square Dance Contest, Chattanooga.

FRIDAY, MAY 17

8:15 p.m.

FOLKLORE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ANTHRACITE COAL MINERS

Sponsored by the J. H. Zerby Newspapers of Pottsville. James Mulray, of St. Clair, leader. George G. Korson, general chairman.

Opening Medley—James Muldowney, fiddle; Bernard Kelly, fiddle; Joseph Gallagher, bones; Arthur Stover, banjo.

Pottsville Clog—George and Frank Cramer.

Ballade—The Miners' Old Refrain; the Shoo Fly; Down in a Coal Mine—Daniel Walsh.

Irish Reels and Jigs—James Muldowney, fiddle.

Reclations—In Dear Old No. 6; John J. Curtis—Joseph Gallagher.

Dance—Jackson's Coming Home—George "Corks" Cramer.

Ballade—When the Breaker Starts Up Full-Time; Mc, Johnny Mitchell

Song and Dance—Stranger at the Scoop—Patrick J. "Giant" O'Neill.

Fiddle Tunes—Irish Tunes—Bernard Kelly.

Duel—Tunes of Yesterday—James Muldowney, fiddle; Joseph Gallagher, bones.

Ballad—I'm a Celebrated Working Man—James Noon.

Dance Contest—George "Corks" Cramer; Patrick J. "Giant" O'Neill.

Finale—Entire Group.

The participants in this program were selected at the Southern Anthracite Miners' Folk Festival held at Pottsville under the auspices of the Zerby Newspapers on April 10th. The anthracite miners are the only workers in a modern industry to have developed an authentic folklore. These ballads are all found in Ballads of the Anthracite Miners, by George G. Korson.

MOUNTAIN MUSIC AND BALLADS

Presented by Kentucky Mountain people.

See Friday afternoon.

SQUARE DANCES

Presented by winners in Broad Street Square Dance Contest, Chattanooga.

THE LAST OF THE LOWRIES—By Paul Green

Presented by Lenair-Kelby College, Hickory, North Carolina. Miss Pearl Setzer, Director.

CAST

Cumha Lowrie, the Aged Mother of the Lowries.....Zona Drum

Jane, Her Daughter.....Frances Miller

Mayno, Cumha's Daughter-in-law.....Helen Tobler

Henry Berry Lowrie, last of the Outlaw Gang.....Leon Matlock

Scene: The rough home of the Lowrie gang in Seuffletown, a swamp region of Killeen County, North Carolina.

Time: A night in the winter of the year 1874.

SATURDAY, MAY 18

2:15 p.m.

NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

Bascom Lunsford, Asheville Chamber of Commerce, Chairman.

Cherokee Tribal Dances and Ceremonials. Presented by Cherokees from the Indian Reservation, Cherokee, North Carolina. Dr. Harold W. Foght, Superintendent of Reservation, Director.

Bear Dance
Peace Pipe Dance
Knee Deep Dance
Horse Dance
War Dance
Victory Eagle Dance
Friendship Dance

Mountain Music, Ballads and Dances. Presented by 100 traditional square dancers and ballad singers, assembled at Asheville, North Carolina, sponsored by the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, Fred Weed, Director. Under the direction of Bascom Lamar Lunsford, "Minstrel of the Appalachians."

Ballads—Black Jack Davie (Child 200).

Merrie Golden Tree (Child 286).

Old Man in the North Countrie (Child 10). Bascom Lamar Lunsford.

Three Nights Experience (Child 274).

Last Gold Dollar—Banjo Song.

Fiddle Tune—Hen Cackle—Miss Samantha Baumgarner, "Our Samantha".

Fiddle Tunes—Gray Eagle; Sourwood Mountain; Fiddling Bill Hensley.

Clog Dancing—Bill Hensley.

Square Dance—Canton W. M. C. A.; Soco Gap, Sam L. Queen, Caller;

Enka Group, Johnnie Crook, Caller; Great Smoky Mountains Group, Arnold Cooper, Caller.

Miscellaneous Mountain Music and Dancing.

"THE LAST OF THE LOWRIES" — By Paul Green

Presented by Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, North Carolina. Miss Pearl Setzer, Director. See Friday evening.

FISK JUBILEE SINGERS

Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

SATURDAY, MAY 18

8:15 p. m.

MOUNTAIN MUSIC AND DANCES; INDIAN CEREMONIALS

See Saturday afternoon.

Ballad—Charles Guiteau; A. J. Gandy Wooten.

FISK JUBILEE SINGERS

Nashville, Tennessee.

NEGRO SPIRITUALS

Presented by Chattanooga Chorus. See Tuesday night.

The Handicraft Exhibition is being held in the basement of the Auditorium, McCallie Avenue and. It is open from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.; 4:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.; 7:00 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.; 10:15 p.m. to 11:15 p.m. Free to all ticket holders.

PAUL GREEN, National President

CONSTANCE ROURKE, Vice-President

SARAH GERTRUDE KNOTT, National Director

M. J. PICKERING, Executive Secretary

ANNA BLANCHE MCGILL, Assistant National Director

CHATTANOOGA COMMITTEE:

R. L. MOORE, General Chairman

NEIL J. CROWLEY, Chairman, Executive Committee

MRS. E. Y. CHAPIN, Vice-Chairman, Executive Committee

MEMBERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE—

W. E. Harrel, I. B. Merriam, Emmett S. Newton, Will S. Keese,
Jr., Harry Miller, R. W. Williams, George Forbes.

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: R. L. Moore, General Chairman;
Arthur Veeder Snell, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce.

If and when we read Sarah Gertrude Knott's life story, we may learn something of her sense of the festival's functions, and we may also learn of her tribulations in making a career of a folk enterprise. Generally, today, bluegrass festivals are paid for by private audiences and record companies, while folk festivals are funded by university and public agencies. Neither method of paying is superior to the other. What should be central in our granting of support in any form is a concern with esthetic and moral standards. Does the festival respect tradition? Does it clarify and, in turn, contribute to a sense of community?

Within the confines of a graphic series, I can only bring some old visual material to the surface, hopefully, to surround it with a few fresh views. The JEMFQ welcomes articles and correspondence on specific events as well as festival-related problems. Hopefully, some of our readers attended past NFFA events and will be willing to search memories or scrap-books for us. We need especially letters or reports which detail the actual learning process at the festivals. What was Cap'n Maitland's response in 1934 to the Ozark square dances as well as to Miss Knott? How are hearts touched and minds opened within the festival's whirl and color?

LIST OF NFFA FESTIVALS

1. St. Louis	April 29-May 2, 1934	21. St. Louis	April 13-16, 1955
2. Chattanooga	May 14-18, 1935		1956 - None
3. Dallas	June 14-18, 1936	22. Oklahoma City	June 26-29, 1957
4. Chicago	May 18-22, 1937		1958 - None
5. Washington	May 6-8, 1938	23. Nashville	May 6-10, 1959
6. Washington	April 27-29, 1939	24. Washington	June 1-4, 1960
7. Washington	April 25-27, 1940	25. Washington	May 18-20, 1961
8. Washington	May 1-3, 1941		1962 - None
9. Washington	May 6-9, 1942	26. Covington, KY	May 23-25, 1963
10. Philadelphia	May 5-8, 1943	27. Covington, KY	June 5-7, 1964
11. Philadelphia	May 10-13, 1944	28. St. Petersburg	April 7-9, 1965
	1945 - None	29. Denver	May 5-7, 1966
12. Cleveland	May 22-26, 1946	30. Syracuse	November 18-22, 1967
13. St. Louis	May 21-24, 1947	31. Milwaukee	July 19-21, 1968
14. St. Louis	April 7-10, 1948	32. Knoxville	October 16-18, 1969
15. St. Louis	April 6-9, 1949		1970 - None
16. St. Louis	April 12-15, 1950	33. Vienna, VA	August 26-29, 1971
17. St. Louis	April 4-7, 1951	34. Vienna, VA	July 27-30, 1972
18. St. Louis	May 14-17, 1952	35. Vienna, VA	July 26-29, 1973
19. St. Louis	April 8-11, 1953	36. Vienna, VA	August 1-4, 1974
20. St. Louis	April 7-10, 1954	37. Vienna, VA	August 1-3, 1975

-- Archie Green
Washington, D.C.

THE PORKY FREEMAN STORY

By Gene Bear and Ken Griffis

Quilla Hugh "Porky" Freeman was born 29 June, 1916, in the countryside near Vera Cruz, Missouri, a quiet place on the Bryant River, complete with its own rustic mill. His parents, William D. Freeman and Elsinia James, taught school and farmed the land. In 1922, the Freeman family of four boys and one girl, Clovis, Noble, Emil, Quilla and Gladys, moved to a small farm outside of Mountain Grove, Missouri, where Porky began his schooling. Fortunately, he grew up in an environment which was influenced greatly by music. Both his parents enjoyed singing in church groups, and they had music in the home, a phonograph, piano and one of the first radios in the area. In the evenings they would sit together and listen to such favorites as Vernon Dalhart, Carson Robison, Bradley Kincaid, Whispering Jack Smith, and Nick Lucas. Although he loved to fish and hunt, Porky's folks saw that he took time to practice on the piano, fife, ocarina, and harmonica. His school teacher observed his musical aptitude and often asked him to sing for his classmates.

In 1928, after living on their farm for six years, the family moved back into the town of Mountain Grove. Porky was fortunate that his family took a sincere interest in his abilities. His mother and father gave him a five-string banjo, and his older brother donated a trumpet to the cause. He became a member of the school's band, and musical studies occupied most of his leisure time. Circumstances permitted him to practice long hours on the violin, guitar, and mandolin until the day arrived when he was proficient enough to perform at pie suppers, barn dances, church socials, and amateur contests. Without realizing it, Porky had already chosen his life's work.

When he was fifteen, Porky quit school and began to ride around the country on freight trains. This was a popular way for many to travel in the late twenties and thirties, and a fair number of songs were written about the trains and their travelers. Subsequently, he and some buddies organized an instrumental quartet, performing on the Country Music Jam-boree at a new radio station in Jefferson City, Missouri. In 1933, Porky decided to return home to complete his education, but was afforded another musical opportunity just as he re-entered school. A local musician, Raul

Hatfield, one of the best old-time fiddlers in the area, and his guitarist, came to play for the high school assembly to solicit votes for a contest sponsored by a new radio station, KGBX, in Springfield, Missouri. They heard about Porky's musical ability and asked if he would join them. The trio, calling themselves "Raul Hatfield and His Ava Wildcats," played throughout southern Missouri and won the contest with 150,000 votes. Their prize was a contract with KGBX, and this was where Porky made his first recording.

This experience convinced him that the field of music was not only fun, but comparatively lucrative as well. Despite his apparent success, his parents encouraged him to finish school and pursue music only parttime. He attended classes, but his spare time was spent playing the banjo at barn dances and social gatherings. He entered a number of fiddling contests, losing more than he won. He remarks with a smile, "there were fiddlers all over the place, and some were pretty darn good."

In early 1937, Porky was employed by radio KWTO, in Springfield, where he joined Bob White and Billy Gilbert as one of the Brownlow Boys; the name coming from one of the large department stores in the city. While at the station, he also was a part of an act that featured Otie and Sue Thompson. It was this couple who gave him the name "Porky." It wasn't long before he was offered a job at radio station KANS in Wichita, Kansas, where he remained until late 1937. Returning to Springfield, Porky ran into his old friend, Jimmy Long, a local singer and guitarist, famed for his vocal duos with Gene Autry. Jimmy suggested to Porky that he move to California and join Autry as a guitarist. Before Porky could complete arrangements to go, he learned that Autry had left Republic Studios in a contract dispute. Continuing to appear around the area, he met the band leader, Doc James, in 1939, and was informed that they needed a bass player. Porky explained to Doc that he was familiar with quite a few instruments and thought he could handle the job. They immediately borrowed a bass from the nearby high school, and Porky performed in his first dance band. When a regular bass player was hired, Porky stayed with the band playing the guitar and trumpet. Porky remarks that he

considered Doc and the other members to be fine musicians and that he greatly enjoyed his time with the band, remaining until 1941 when he left to make a short tour with the Weaver Brothers and Elviry Stage Show. Later that year he made his way to Fort Worth, where he worked for a period of time with Bill Boyd and Roy Newman. Returning again to Springfield in early 1942, he became a part of the very popular Slim Wilson show on radio KGBX. By this time Slim was a legendary figure in this general area.

Always retaining a desire to move to California, Porky was pleased and receptive when he received a call from another old friend, Red Murrell, offering him a position with his group. For many years Murrell was one of the most popular country-western entertainers on the west coast. Fiddler Jesse Ashlock, of Bob Wills fame, was with Murrell when Porky came to the band. A year later Porky joined Bill "Slumber" Nichols and his group where they held sway at the Four Aces Club on South Vermont in Los Angeles. Appearing with the Nichols group from time to time were Bill Hughes, Al Barker, Red Eggner, and Cotton Thompson.

The year 1943 proved to be the turning point in Porky's career. His ambitions, talents, and important opportunities combined to form the basis for real success. For some time he had played the very popular boogie-woogie music of that era and was among the first to feature it on the guitar. He recorded "Porky's Boogie Woogie on the Strings," for the first time in 1943 on the Morris Lee label. The song proved so popular that it was subsequently pressed on both sides of the record which was a great assist to juke box owners. It was well received by the servicemen, both in the states and overseas. In around 1944, using the name "The Porky Freeman Trio," he signed his first recording contract with A. R. A., recording his "Boogie Woogie on the Strings" among others. That year he also appeared with one of Capitol's first recording stars, Jack Guthrie, on his recording of "Oklahoma Hills." He was active in club work and made a tour with the Sons of the Pioneers. He joined Texas Jim Lewis, at the 97th Street Corral in Los Angeles, and from there became acquainted with country musicians who he knew and respected throughout his professional career.

Porky shared the limelight with such artists as Spade Cooley, Hank Penney, Red Murrell, Tex Atchison, Wade Ray, the Sons of the Pioneers, Stuart Hamblen, Happy Perryman, Tex Tyler, Johnny Bond, Jimmie Wakely, Jimmie LeFevre, and many others. In 1945 Porky appeared on a large number of Four-Star recordings by T. Texas Tyler, including "Remember Me" and the very popular "Deck of Cards." For these sessions, Four-Star employed what was very possibly the first tape master for recording.

The year 1946 was primarily spent on various recording sessions. Two of Porky's own recordings, "I Left My Heart in Mississippi" and "That Baby's Changed" featured Jesse Ashlock--both being very well done. During the late forties he played for numerous clubs and dances with Red Murrell, Tex Atchison, Polly Possum and Sisters. He also appeared on recordings with Red Murrell, Jimmie Dolan, the Oklahoma Sweethearts, Jack Guthrie, Wally Fowler, Tex Tyler, Curt Massey, and Slumber Nichols.

During the fifties and sixties, Porky appeared with many of the popular country-western groups around Los Angeles, including Cliffie Stone, Stuart Hamblen, Sandy Stanton and His Group--while appearing at Royer's Big Red Barn in Lawndale, and Jay Thomas--then appearing at the Saddle Club in Los Angeles. He was impressed with the artists with the Thomas band, which included Jimmy Childers and Johnny Cheshire on fiddles. Elgin Swineford on Piano, and Stu McGoo on drums.

For the past few years Porky has been appearing at various entertainment spots in and around Los Angeles. I recently had the pleasure of spending an evening being entertained by Porky, along with Stuart Hamblen, Johnny Bond, Lloyd Perryman, Roy Lanham, and Rome Johnson. It is apparent that Porky has lost none of his outstanding talent on the guitar and banjo. This fine musician, who is one of the true gentlemen of the music business, has long been a real credit to his profession.

A PRELIMINARY PORKY FREEMAN DISCOGRAPHY

In the following discography, we deviate slightly from the usual format, inasmuch as exact recording dates, full session personnel, and instrumentation are generally lacking. The first column gives master number; release numbers are given in the last column. It will be noted that there is often an inconsistency between the given date (presumably recording date) and the master numbers.

November 1943

Porky Freeman Trio: Freeman, electric guitar; Al Barker, bass; Red Murrell, guitar.

468A	Porky's Boogie Woogie On the Strings -- No. 1	Morris Lee 1944
468	Porky's Boogie Woogie On the Strings -- No. 2	Morris Lee 1944

December 1944

Porky Freeman, electric guitar; Merle Travis, guitar; Red Murrell, guitar; Al Barker, bass.

12163	Boogie Woogie On the Strings	Ara RM 118
12164	On the Night Train to Memphis	Ara RM 114
12165	Rum and Coca Cola (Ruth Fox, vocal)	Ara RM 118

September 1945

As above.

1082	I Love You Too Much (Barker, vocal)	Ara 4009
1083	Tiger Rag	Ara 131
108?	Boogie Woogie Boy (Travis, vocal)	Ara 133
108?	Porky's Boogie (with Tommy Sargent)	Ara 133
?	Boogie Woogie Boy	4 Star ET40, LP ET40
1823	Tiger Rag	4 Star 1423

December 1945

As above, except with additional musicians at different times: Gail Daniels, bass; Jemmy Pruett, piano; Ardie Hudson, piano; Freddy Deblaze, drums.

1827	Boogie Woogie On the Strings	4 Star 1446
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ca. 1945

As above, with Douglas Venable.

D1021-V	Boogie Woogie on Strings	Western 1019
D1022-V	Guitar Polka	Western 1021

May 1946

As above, without Venable.

1231	That Baby's Changed (Slumber Nichols, bass; Jesse Ashlock, vocal)	Ara 4012
1232	I Left My Heart In Mississippi (Ashlock, vocal)	Ara 4012
1820	That Baby's Changed (Jesse Ashlock, vocal)	4 Star 1246
1821	I Left My Heart In Mississippi (Ashlock, vocal)	4 Star 1287
1827	Pickin' 8 To the Bar	4 Star 1569
1827-A	Rollin' South	4 Star 1598

ca. 1946

As above.

3115	Spanish Bells (with Cliffie Stone)	Capitol 40096
BW177	Western Range Ahead (with Buck Nation)	Black & White 1002
SRC510	Pecos Polka (with Ardie Hudson)	Memo 2024-4
20576-A	Spanish Bells (with Jimmie Dolan)	Modern 7754



Photo by "Chas. Jones"



Above, left to right: Porky Freeman, Al Barker, Red Murrell (1944); below, left to right: The Texas Jim Lewis Band--Red Murrell, Merle Travis, Margie Linville [Fiddlin' Kate], George Bamby, Roy Ball (partially visible), Texas Jim Lewis, Porky Freeman, Charlie Linville, Vic Davis (not visible--at piano) (1945).

December 1947

As above.

1769	Spanish Bells	4 Star 1233, LP ET16
1792	Everybody Loves That Boogie (Freeman, vocal)	4 Star 1233, LP ET16
1795	Electric Guitar Rag	4 Star 1287, LP ET16
1798	Chicken Picken Boogie	4 Star 1598
?	Slick Chick Boogie	4 Star ET39, LP ET39
?	Indian Love Call	4 Star ET40, LP ET40
?	Fat Gal Blues (Freeman, vocal)	4 Star ET39, LP ET39

January 1949

As above.

3065	I Had a Little Wife (Freeman, vocal)	4 Star 1423, LP ET40
3070	Pecos Polka	4 Star 1315, LP ET39
3071	Electric Guitar Blues	4 Star 1569
?	Going Away Blues	4 Star ET39, LP ET39
?	The New Look (Freeman, vocal)	4 Star ET40, LP ET40
?	Slow Train Boogie	4 Star ET40, LP ET40
?	Okie Dokie Okie (Freeman, vocal)	4 Star ET39, LP ET39

A PRELIMINARY VERNON DALHART DISCOGRAPHY. PART XVII: CARDINAL RECORDINGS

In this issue of *JEMFO* we continue with the small record companies for which Dalhart recorded briefly before discovering his second career in hillbilly songs. Parts XVII and XVIII deal with rather obscure companies that were in business in the very early 1920s. Cardinal, together with Clarion, Cleartone, Melva, Phantasie Concert, and Royal, constituted a family of labels (or companies) that seem to have been in business only in 1921 and 1922. Clarion, for example, was announced as a new firm in October 1921 but issued records for only two months. The Dalhart recordings seem to come from three separate sessions. It is known that Cardinal master C-757 was recorded on 11 Oct 1921 and issued on Cardinal 2065 in December 1921, which helps to date the items given below. Label abbreviations and pseudonym abbreviations are as follows:

Record Labels	Pseudonyms
Crd -- Cardinal	AT -- Allen Turner
Clr -- Clarion	FD -- Frank Dalbert
Clt -- Cleartone	JB -- James Belmont
Mlv -- Melva	TJ -- Thos. F. Jamieson
PC -- Phantasie Concert	WW -- Walter Whitlock
Pur -- Puritan	FB/RDO -- Frank Benning w/Royal Dance Orch
Roy -- Royal	

1921-22, New York

C-689	My Sunny Tennessee	Crd 2041, PC 15242 (WW), Pur 501
C-702	Ain't You Coming Out Malinda	Clr 3005, PC 15243 (AT), Clt P-104
C-706	Plantation Lullaby	Clr 3007, PC 15246 (WW), Clt P-105
C-748	Honolulu Honey	Clr 3007, PC 15248 (TJ & AT), Clt P-102, Mlv 8012 (JB), Roy 10105 (FD)
C-784	I've Got My Habits On	Roy 10141 (FB/RDO)

PART XVIII: OLYMPIC RECORDINGS

The Olympic label was apparently a product of the Fletcher Record Co. of New York. It has been speculated that Fletcher Henderson, the jazz pianist, had something to do with the company. In some cases, there seem to have been tie-ins with the Cardinal group above. Dalhart recorded for Olympic in about December 1922 or January 1923. No master numbers are known for the following, as the numbers pressed in the wax are Olympic catalog numbers. Olympic recordings appeared also on the La Belle label and the Banner label--in the latter case before the label became part of the Plaza group. The information in Parts XVII and XVIII was compiled by E. S. Turner.

Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes	Olympic 14115, La Belle 308 (as by Howard Hull)
Silver Threads Among the Gold	Olympic 17113
Can't Yo' Hear Me Callin' Caroline	Olympic 17113, Banner 2019

BENEFIT CONCERT NETS JEMF OVER \$6000

On 8 December 1974, Los Angeles radio station KLAC ran a live broadcast from the Palomino Club in North Hollywood for the purpose of raising money for the JEMF. In addition to moneys raised from telephoned pledges all during the day, the Palomino's owner, Tommy Thomas, donated the receipts at the gate and a portion of the bar money to the JEMF, resulting in a total net revenue of approximately \$6400.

Most of the KLAC radio personalities were present to host portions of the show, including Dick Haynes, Harry Newman, Jay Lawrence, Art Nelson, Larry Scott, and Chuck Sullivan. Among the many artists who donated their time and talent to performing on stage throughout the day and evening were Johnny Bond, Merle Travis, Tex Williams, Brian Collins, Connie Van Dyke, Guy and Ralna, Smokey Rogers, Stuart Hamblen, Dorsey Burnette, Chill Wills, Eddie Dean, Mac Curtis, Pat Boone, Brenda Smith, Ray Whitley, and Freddie Hart. Volunteers from the staff of KLAC and the JEMF helped with answering and processing phone donations throughout the duration of the benefit.

Cliffie Stone, President of the Academy of Country Music, presented this year's annual Art Satherley Award to recipient Johnny Bond. The award is given each year to the person most distinguished for his support of the Friends of the JEMF during the year. The show was conceived by KLAC's General Manager, Bill Ward, who is also an advisor of the JEMF; it was produced by Ward and Hal Smith, KLAC's program director. At the conclusion of the evening Gene Bear conducted an auction from the stage to raise additional funds.

The JEMF is grateful to all of the above individuals for their contributions to the success of this "radiothon" concert, and to the many radio listeners who responded to the requests for donations. All donations of over \$7.50 will be treated as regular memberships in the Friends of the JEMF for the calendar year of 1975.



Left to right: Tommy Thomas and Billy Thomas (See article on following page)

PROFILE OF A NIGHT CLUB OPERATOR

By Ken Griffis

[For many years the Palomino Club in North Hollywood, California, has been the Mecca for most Country-Western entertainers. Operated by the Thomas Brothers, the Palomino is perhaps the number one country night spot in the United States. The Thomas Brothers also have long been supporters of the JEMF, donating all proceeds from several benefits held there over the past few years. Tommy Thomas is acknowledged as one of the most astute figures in the entertainment field. Recently, he was interviewed by Ken Griffis as part of a series of discussions with leaders in the business end of the contemporary country music scene (see also the interview with KLAC General Manager Bill Ward in the previous issue of JEMFQ.) These interviews should be enlightening to readers interested in the mechanics of the country music entertainment field.]

Tommy, when did you and Billy first get an interest in country night club work?

Well, our dad owned a bar in East Chicago, Indiana, and we lived in an apartment over the bar, and I guess the music got in our blood at an early age. Many's the night that I went to sleep to the beat of the "Beer Barrel Polka."

When did you open your first establishment?

In 1946, when I got out of the service. We called it the Thomas Lounge. It was in East Chicago, and we catered mainly to the local trade which was predominantly Polish. We had a three-piece combo.

You didn't feature much country music then?

No, I was aware of the music, but we had to play the music that was popular with our trade.

What brought you to California?

I was having so much trouble with an allergy problem that I felt I had to move. So Billy and I came to California in 1952. We settled near the beach in Santa Monica and later moved to Long Beach.

You opened a club shortly after you arrived?

No, as a matter of fact, the Thomas Brothers' first jobs in Los Angeles were as waiters. We started at the bottom and we learned the hard way.

You actually worked as waiters?

That's right.

Well, when did you take over the Palomino?

We looked around for a place to operate, but our first visit to the San Fernando Valley in August 1952, left me with the thought that no one in their right mind would live in such a hot place. But, we made contact with the owners of the Palomino Club in North Hollywood, and we shortly arranged a partnership. It had been open about six months and they weren't doing too well. Later we bought out the others and took it over.

How much did it cost you in total to buy the Palomino?

\$22,000.00

Wow, what a bargain!

Yes, but it was quite a bit at the time. And, of course, it wasn't a strong operation then. Most people don't realize how much work goes into putting together a successful plant. You don't just buy it and stand back and collect your money.

What was your first order of business?

The first thing we did was to tour every bar and country operation from Bakersfield to San Diego. Night after night I spent time studying all the successful clubs to see what made them a success. I loved to visit the different places and learned a great deal.

What spots were your biggest competition at the time?

Of course, the most popular country and western gathering place was Marty Landau's Riverside Rancho in Los Angeles. Others were the Rag Doll which featured pop music and another country spot was the Cobblestone.

How well do I remember the Riverside Rancho. We spent many an enjoyable evening there listening to Spade Cooley, Tex Williams and Bob Wills.

Yes, it was very popular but we countered their popularity by catering to the musicians from the many TV and radio shows, and the movies. Eddie Cletro and Charlie Aldridge would bring their bands in and sometimes as many as two or three hundred of their fans. Many times, after their shows closed, they would invite their fans to join them at the Pal, where they would perform in a very informal way.

Then your first house bands were not actually "house" bands?

That's right. For the first few years, we let any group play who wanted to perform.

Did it cost you much for these fellows?

Yes, sometimes it would cost us as much as a hundred dollars a night for the bands to appear.

Quite a change from what you must pay today, isn't it Tommy?

Yes, but you have to remember we didn't charge much for our drinks. Beer cost 50¢ a bottle. We debated for a long time before going to 60¢. Finally, after a long period of time, we shocked people by going to 75¢. I even had a local bar owner come in and say, "Tommy, you're a great guy." He explained they weren't making it too well until, following the Palomino's lead they raised their beer to 75¢. He said it made it possible for them to go into the black for a change.

As I recall, your club was the launching place for many of the name artists of today.

That's right. We had such people as Buck Owens and Merle Haggard appear with us--paying Merle \$50.00 a night and \$100.00 for the whole Owens band. Glen Campbell was a side man in one of our bands. J. P. Morgan was a popular entertainer with us.

When did you actually install your first true house band?

It was around 1960. Gene Davis was our first and he did a great job. It was in the early sixties that Marty Landau began to book the acts for us. They became more expensive too. I can recall

Marty Robbins cost us \$500.00 and Johnny Cash about the same. We had such great stars as Faron Young, Freddie Hart, Jim Reeves, and Patsy Cline. Ray Price and his whole group cost us around \$300.00. I guess we had about every early star of the Grand Ole Opry appear with us at one time or the other. Nudie was very helpful. He took me to Nashville and introduced me to everyone there. About this time, too, many of the clubs and bars around here began to close, mainly due to poor management, I guess. We took advantage of the situation to consolidate our position. We worked hard to improve our service and to expand our advertising by taking out ads in most of the newspapers and really began to advertise on radio and TV. Cal Worthington had his country music TV show at that time, and it proved very helpful to us. Radio KIEV in Glendale went country and we first advertised with them. A little later, KBBQ changed over to country music--I guess around 1967--and it was there I first met Bill Ward. Unquestionably. Bill Ward, first at KBBQ and later at KLAC helped us a great deal. I must add that I consider Bill one of the most talented executives in radio today.

You've had several fine house bands over the years.

We sure have. Gene was with us for several years. Then we had Red Rhoades, and then the fine Tony Booth Band, with brother Larry. Now we have Jerry Irman and they are doing a great job for us.

Do you miss those early days, Tommy?

Yes, I do, Ken. They were actually some of the happiest days I've ever had. And, too, I miss the music of that era. While I can accept today's music, nothing would please me more than to see an old country boy standing up on stage singing a simple country song. For instance, I would like to see Johnny Cash perform his early songs with that simple background. That was really great.

Well, there's still a lot of artists today who can make that kind of music--Johnny Bond, Jimmy Wakely, Eddie Dean, Tex Williams, the Sons of the Pioneers. Why don't you feature them more often?

Believe me, Ken, I'd like to. But the fans of today have to relate to today's artist and their music, more so than ever before. You know that the music of today is altogether different than, say ten, fifteen, or twenty years ago. The artists sing of today's events and I guess that's what the fans want to hear. They have to relate.

Yes, I guess so, Tommy. I just don't happen to agree fully that the fans are hearing today exactly what they would like to hear. I am

one of those mavericks who feel that the fans have been force-fed music and told, "you like it, understand!"

Well, I agree with you to a point. Sure, many fans still like the music or sounds of the past. I do. I thoroughly enjoy listening to Johnny and Jimmy. Eddie has one of the best voices around. But the emphasis on today's music is there and we can't control it. I've always been impressed with western music. I love to hear Roy Rogers and the Sons of the Pioneers. Their music is so great. I enjoyed the sounds of the Bob Wills band too. I guess I'm just hung-up on Texas fiddle music. That's why I enjoy a lot of Hank Thompson music. The group, "Asleep at the Wheel," is awfully good. Bill Monroe and blue grass music I particularly like, too.

Sounds like you aren't totally enchanted with the music we have today.

I wouldn't say that. I like all kinds of music. You name it, I like it. But, yes, I miss the old sounds. Some of today's artists are really great, others aren't.

Are you saying that some of today's music and artists aren't here to stay?

Oh, I think it's a changing scene. What we like today, won't be in fashion tomorrow. But, I guess what you are getting at is are the top artists of today actually "top" artists? The answer, I feel, is no. I can't see how some of these people make the charts. That goes for some of their songs, too. Heck, if you take close notice, many of our so-called "stars" weren't stars this time last year. In all likelihood they won't be stars this time next year, either. But you must realize that the record companies put up a lot of money on their artists and songs, so they have to push them as hard as possible. I could book many of the recent artists that have had two or three so-called "hit" songs, and they wouldn't draw worth a darn.

Do you feel some of the record companies try to set a trend rather than reflect one?

Sure they do. But more often than not they happen to be right. I don't feel that over a long period the country music fan can be fooled. If they don't like the music, or the artist, they just won't come to see them or buy their records. Apparently the record companies are selling a lot of records. I try here, at the Palomino, to offer what I think the country music fan wants to hear. I'm not impressed with a name. The Palomino has a policy to reflect what we feel the fans want, not sell them on what I think they want. I feel that's one reason for our success.

Do any of today's top artists particularly appeal to you?

The ones that come immediately to mind are Marty Robbins, Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, Charlie Pride, and of course, Buck Owens. Perhaps many people don't realize it but we owe a lot to Buck. He kept country music alive here on the coast at a time when it looked like it might not survive. I'll surprise you with this--I think Tex Williams is a great talent who has never really been exploited. Despite his past greatness, he could still be greater with the right direction.

I happen to agree with you about Tex. Do any of the newer stars appeal to you?

If you want to call Cal Smith, Ronnie Milsap, Diana Trask, and Linda Ronstadt new. Linda is an outstanding talent. Ronnie has such a fresh, exciting sound. I feel he is a real comer. I enjoy just listening to Cal Smith.

Tommy, how do you go about booking most of your name artists of today?

Many by direct contact. Others through their agents. When an artist is out on the coast for a TV performance, they call me.

I can't see how you can afford most of them at today's prices?

Well, most of them want to appear here. I've had them say that it's a must to appear at the Palomino. I think I'm correct when I say there is a certain amount of prestige in appearing at our club.

Well, what can you afford to pay them? At best, you can only sell out two shows and that doesn't appear to be enough for some of these artists.

Most of the acts will take the door. In some instances they will work for little or nothing. They just like to appear here. We've had a lot of artists just show up and perform for free.

Then you don't depend on the door that much?

No, I would say that 99% of our revenue is from the drinks.

Ninety-nine percent? That's surprising. How about food?

It's a more or less break-even proposition. We have a good day crowd for food. Many of our customers come in day-in and day-out. The country music fan is a loyal one.

Tommy, how important is a good review in a local newspaper to your club? For instance, do you look forward to a good word from say, Robert Hilburn?

You bet. Robert Hilburn is one of the most powerful forces on the West Coast, not only in country music, but more so in rock and other forms. Hilburn is really an interesting person. He comes in unannounced, sits down with his coke, and concentrates on the music. I've sat down next to him and he hasn't said ten words while the music is going. Most people don't know how informed that guy is. I can remember he was a great supporter of Waylon Jennings at a time when Waylon's popularity was in doubt. One thing about it, Hilburn will write what he thinks is right, not what may be popular.

Tom, I hate to touch on what may be a sensitive subject, but why is the music at the Palomino so loud? Most of the time you can't carry on a decent conversation with someone right next to you.

Yes, I'm aware of it. There are times when I can't stand it myself. I try to control the volume. The problem is that most artists just don't know how to work a room like the Palomino. I have turned the sound down, and it goes right back up. Too many of the artists really crowd the mike and it hurts people's ears.

I'll agree with you there, but I find your house band to be as big an offender as any artist. Surely you can control them?

I guess I'll have to get a sound man to work on it. We probably need one.

Well, Tommy, you have been the most successful country music club on the West Coast for many years. Can you spell out the reason for your success?

Yes. For a club to survive, I feel it must have three main ingredients:

1. The plant. A room must be big enough, but not too big. Atmosphere is important too.
2. A policy. How to properly handle such things as admissions, quality of food and drink. You just can't short-change people.
3. Communication. Getting your message to the public. Keep strong ties to radio and the newspapers. Good rapport with the people you work with in the industry is vital. If you don't have all three of these, you've just got problems.

Well, Tommy, it's apparent from all the artists and fans I've talked with, that they greatly respect the Thomas Brothers. Perhaps it could come down to something as simple as that.

Thanks for your time, Tommy.



Left to right: Charlie Rich, Tommy Thomas, Kris Kristofferson at the Palomino Club.

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES ON THE USES OF BLUES

by Christopher Lornell

[Editor's note: "Kip" Lornell is a visiting student at Guilford College, Greensboro, No. Carolina, working toward his B. A. degree in Cultural Studies from Empire State College in New York. He is a Contributing Editor to *Living Blues* and has done field work both in the Albany, N.Y. area, and in the Southeastern United States.]

A black man living in the rural South in the 1930s was intrinsically tied to the land. There was very little industry and the better paying jobs generally went to the white man. The great majority of blues players were no more than part-time musicians who worked full-time in occupations other than music. The only exception was the rare individual who was able to make his entire livelihood from his musical skills. Usually they were forced to "scuffle," meaning that they travelled extensively in search of musical jobs. The alternative for an aspiring full-time musician was to move to an urban setting where the concentrated population meant that jobs were easily obtained.

Three out of the four informants whose backgrounds and observations forms the basis of this paper followed the pattern of full-time work and part-time musicianship. Buddy Durham held a wide variety of jobs in central Georgia before moving up to Albany, N.Y. in 1956: farming, saw milling, hauling pulp wood and working for the railroad. In his own words: "Most anything you could name." Both C. D. Dobbs and Aaron Washington have similar backgrounds. Dobbs worked on a small cotton farm, owned by relatives, his sole capacity being that of a farm hand or laborer. While living in rural South Carolina as a young man, Aaron Washington worked on the farm of his parents. As part of a large family with seven children, Washington labored on the subsistence level farm until he struck out on his own. The one exception is Fats Jefferson, a pianist, who left his home in western Texas to find employment as a full-time musician. His wanderings took him from Louisville, through Boston and New York City, eventually to Albany. What makes Fats an exception is that he deliberately left with the intention of making music a full-time career, and that his father was a Baptist Minister and not dependent upon the land for his living.

Such personal histories are quite common among blues musicians. For example, Arthur Crudup's career follows a similar pattern. He was born in Forest, Mississippi in 1905 and, before reaching Chicago and recording in 1941, Crudup had spent his "life as water-boy, logger,

levee worker, sawmill hand and farmer..."¹. Another blues singer with a similar background is the well known Muddy Waters. In a conversation with Paul Oliver, Waters mentions:

"I went to school but they didn't give you too much schooling because just as soon as you were big enough you get to working in the fields. I guess I was a big boy for my age, but I was just a boy and they put me to workin' right along side the men. I handled the plough, chopped cotton, did all of the things."².

In each of the instances above, music was simply a leisure time activity with work taking priority. As Paul Oliver and others have demonstrated in countless interviews, most blues players followed this same basic pattern.

Again, with the exception of Fats Jefferson, my informants were born into families already economically dependent upon the land. Their fathers and grandfathers had all worked with the land in various but similar capacities. Such a history was the norm as Son House, a well known musician from the Mississippi delta, who in 1943 emigrated to Rochester, N.Y., pointed out:

"At that time, there was mostly farm work, and sometimes it got pretty critical. Low wages and--well, people kind of suffered a little during some of those years...I'd make a living by working in the cotton fields, I'd plow, pick, and chop cotton."³.

With little or no educational opportunities available to them, C. D. Dobbs, like Muddy Waters and many others, attended school until he was old enough to work. In Dobbs case, he was twelve when it became necessary to quit school. The avenues that education might have opened up were blocked. It was economic necessity which forced many children to go to work at an early age to help bring money into the family. Those who sharecropped were trapped even more desperately by the need to pay back the rent they owed. Son House provides some insight into such conditions:

"Some of those that grew crops--if they paid their debts for the food they ate during the year, why, if they came out and cleared as much as forty or fifty dollars for a year, they were satisfied."4.

Many black families were dependent upon the land for their income and were forced into a cycle of working long hot hours in the fields for pitiful wages. Many weeks, they worked five and a half or even six days in a week. In many cases, the children who were old enough were recruited to work as a means of adding extra hands at no immediate cost to the parents. This meant that they too were caught up in the cycle of working up to ten hours a day.

The economic situation generally had not greatly improved since the slavery times. Instead of legal ownership of blacks outright, the social fabric was dominated by harsh economic conditions which constituted, quite often a situation which left blacks destitute to an extreme. This meant that great amounts of time had to be devoted to economic existence. Many people were little better off than their forefathers had been. It was only when time could be spared from economically oriented ventures, that it could be taken for diversions like music.

Economic motives figured heavily in the movement of blacks from the rural South to the urban centers of the North. Both the social and economic conditions in the South were certainly not advantageous to the blacks. The cities of the North offered an escape from the drudgery and poverty in the South. The reality was that the larger farms with money for equipment and other innovations would be money making ventures, while the small sharecroppers and independent farms would, generally, never rise above a subsistence level. What the North had to offer was jobs, often in industrial areas, and a certain sense of freedom. The Chicago Defender helped to spur this feeling that the North offered liberties that the repressive, heavily segregated South in 1916 could not:

"Have they stopped their Jim Crow cars? Can you buy a Pullman sleeper where you wish? Will they give you a square deal in court yet? If you can freeze to death in the North and be free, why freeze to death in the South and be a slave?"5.

Within a few years after this was written, Aaron Washington started to move North. For a few years, he was based in Ashville, North Carolina, but soon, in 1926, he moved up to Catskill, New York and immediately found work in a cement plant:

"I think I've found a better living in the North. The most I ever made in the South was 50¢ an hour. When I

left the South and came to Catskill, I be in Catskill four days, then I was working in the cement plant. That job, we was doing piece work, loading cement into barges, we'd load one boat a day...make \$10.90."

Clearly, the wages offered in the North were far superior to almost anything a black could find in the South. However the cost of living was far higher in the North. The rent had to be paid, in addition to which food and other expenses raised the cost. Buddy Durham amplifies:

"Considering they could make more money (in the North), but the living would take it. A lot of people were like me and just got stuck, I guess. The biggest of 'em get up here and have a notion of going back, 'cause I've talked to a lot of them. They get a notion of going back but then they get a good job and they stay. Like me, I got this job up at the courthouse, it's a retirement job with plenty of vacation. It's steady and that's what a lot of people want.

I wouldn't think I made more money up here. I make more a week up here but I don't have as much to live on after my rent and everything. We used to raise all our food, down South, that's the reason we had more money. Just like, if you plant some vegetables, you could do all right."

In many cases, relatives would already be up in the cities and, in turn, others would come up to join them. In Buddy Durham's case, his step-son, just out of the army, invited the family to come up to Albany. With money they had saved, Buddy and his step-son began a junking business. This was in 1956. Two years earlier, C. D. Dobbs had come up from Mississippi in much the same way. His older brother had moved to the area after the representatives from a local steelmill came through their town looking for workers, C. D. decided to move up for the chance at a more lucrative job, but also because of the uncertainty over civil rights:

"They (my children) get a better break up in the North. The South would be the place to raise them up, if you could raise them up without any trouble. They've got more privileges up here. Now things are much different since when I left because I've been back down there almost every year. But when I was living down there, you wouldn't want to bring your kids up there."

Other blues musicians have expressed similar sentiments in the past. When asked

why he had moved to New York City from Georgia, Larry Johnson replied:

"Conditions. Looking for better conditions. As many other bluesmen had looked for before me, traveling from the South to the North. And I just got on a bus one day and wound up in New York. I knew not what I would find, but..."⁶.

J. B. Hutto, who migrated from Blackville, South Carolina to Chicago in 1949 came seeking much the same thing as the others, according to Mike Rowe:

"J. B.'s mother took the family to Chicago on receiving glowing reports from her eldest son, who was working as a chef on the Milwaukee Railroad. They settled on the West Side, on Lake Street, and J. B. quickly got a job as a painter and plumber..."⁷.

Fats Jefferson is, as usual, an exception. His move from the country to the urban areas, at about the same time as Aaron Washington's, was prompted by professional reasons. Blues comprises only a fraction of the repertoire that Fats commands. When the blues were in demand, Fats would play them, but he had to cater to the whims and requests of the public. Fats had to be where there was a population concentration which would support him. Thus, it was only common sense that he would gravitate toward the larger urban areas in the North.

In joining the migration Northward, these men were only following the pattern which drew many blacks to the Northern urban centers. That wages were higher in the North is clearly demonstrated by Mike Rowe:

"The 'pull' factors are very clearly illustrated by comparison of the Negro median wage per annum which for 1949 was \$2254 for Detroit, \$1919 for Chicago and only \$439 for Mississippi."⁸.

During the two decades that these four men left the South (Jefferson and Washington, between 1920 and 1930; Durham and Dobbs, between 1950 and 1960), the net population loss due to immigration from the South was high⁹:

1900-1910	180,000
1910-1920	453,800
1920-1930	773,400
1930-1940	347,500
1940-1950	1,597,000
1950-1960	1,457,000

As for the concentration of blacks in rural and urban settings:

"In 1900 77.4% of the black population lived in rural areas while the urban population was 22.6%. In sixty years the rural proportion has dropped to 26.8% while the urban black population has risen to 73.2%."¹⁰.

Clearly, my informants are not unusual in their migration patterns. Many other blacks moved in similar directions, probably motivated by similar factors.

The question of how the uses of blues were influenced by these changes now presents itself. First of all, what are the uses of music? Alan P. Merriam suggests that:

"Use (of music) then, refers to the situation in which music is employed in human actions...when we speak of the uses of music, we are referring to the ways in which music is employed in human society."¹¹.

Some societies incorporate music into a great many widely varied daily activities. The Crow Indians use music on many occasions, for example, lullabies to help their children sleep, sacred songs to contact supernatural beings, or songs sung at times of personal crisis. In short, "songs are mentioned in connection with almost every activity."¹².

In the case of blues, as it was performed in the rural South during the 1920s and 1930s, its uses were quite limited. The primary use of blues was as an entertainment form at the weekly parties known variously as "frolics", "breakdowns" or "fish fries". These social events, along with church meetings, provided about the only opportunity for rural blacks to get together. It allowed for the chance to meet people from around the area, find out the latest news, pass gossip around, swap stories, and just generally let loose. During the week, most people were confined to their farms and, once in a while, visiting a few of the close neighbors. At the frolics, they could dance, drink alcohol, gamble, mix with the opposite sex; all activities that were generally unavailable during the rest of the week. It was at these frolics that blues were most often played.

Buddy Durham describes what a frolic was like in Georgia back in the 1930s.

"I played 'em [blues] mostly for frolics; I never did make no records. Down South, the folks barbecue hogs, a billy goat and sell it. Some of us played guitars, pianos, people danced. That's what we call an all night frolic. This was mostly on Saturday night, we didn't have 'em during the week, 'cause we were working. Sometimes I'd play when I'm around the house, but mostly it was for frolics."

The frolics, where blues served as one of the main sources of entertainment, provided a base of commonality where people could gather and interact on a social level. They were informal events held at different houses each week with people contributing, often for a price, food and alcohol; another man might oversee

the card games while the musicians performed blues. Thus described, these frolics echo Merriam:

"Music, then, provides a rallying point around which the members of society gather to engage in activities which require the cooperation and coordination of the group...every society has occasions signaled by music which draws its members together and reminds them of their unity."¹³

Economic and social patterns, most especially in the case of blacks, are deeply interwoven. Three of my informants who remained tied to the land, Dobbs, Durham and Washington, also remained no more than part-time musicians. For them, blues playing was more or less a hobby but one that remained in demand. The blues was a popular form of music back in the 1920s and 1930s; it was in the mainstream of commercial black music at the time. Blues recordings sold well and the public, eager to hear more of what they listened to on records, sought out blues musicians. Quite naturally, as the social climate changed, so did the taste of the public. Just as the presence of a record can create the demand for a musical form, its absence can have an equally adverse affect. Buddy Durham believes that the current lack of interest, with the black community, is due pretty much to the media:

"They like it (commercial soul music) because they don't hear no blues. Just like on "Soultrain" on Saturdays, they don't play no blues. If the people would hear it, they'd like it."

C. D. Dobbs holds a view similar to that of Buddy Durham's. He can well remember how the popularity of Bukka White increased dramatically when his initial recording, "Shake'em On Down", was first heard in Aberdeen in 1935. With the decline of blues on the more influential forms of media (radio and television), Dobbs also views a decline in the interest in blues.

Along with the control the media exerts on musical tastes, the social changes that have occurred in the last forty years are quite dramatic. While many of the older blacks I have spoken to retain a fondness for what was the popular music of their youth, many young blacks don't seem to feel that the blues constitute an expression of their views. William Ferris touches upon this issue:

"When we approach the blues we must realize that they are primarily the expression of a generation which grew up before the Civil Rights Movement, and the attitudes expressed in their verses are very different from those expressed by 'soul' singers. The younger generation has turned from blues to soul music..."¹⁴

It would seem safe to conclude that the decline in the popularity of blues is not simply the lack of exposure that it receives on radio and television. The media's presentations are based largely on the changing tastes of the public which, in turn, are at least partially determined by the social conditions and climate. Therefore it is only logical that as the Civil Rights Movement and "Black Pride" helped to reweave the fabric of Black life, the focus of the music and other arts would change. Naturally, as musical fads and trends come about, they are exploited by the media. Consequently, blues has virtually been left behind; at least in its pristine state.

With the different social context of the urban area to contend with, the uses of blues shifted somewhat in the 1940s and 1950s. As a popular form of music, the older country blues forms were out of fashion. Certainly, the recordings of Muddy Waters and other more "modern" blues artist sold well, but, with few exceptions, the demand for a single artist performing older blues numbers was not great. Buddy Durham explains what the situation has been like for him since arriving in Albany nearly twenty years ago:

"I plays a little alone. Sometimes we goes out and be around the Pearl Grill, we get to play a piece or two apiece; that's guitar pickers. Just to keep from being home. Sometimes you invite people around, for birth-right suppers, you know birthdays. They drink, raise sand, dance. ... Yeah, its sort of a frolic."

When I first got here, I used to play around with a couple guys, around at his house or mine. A few of us, we used to have guitar parties but we didn't do nothing."

Neither Buddy Durham nor C. D. Dobbs has owned a guitar for many years. Aaron Washington possesses one but uses it so infrequently that the strings have not been changed for eight years. There has been little interest, publicly, in their music and gradually they have stopped playing. The uses for the blues music performed by my informants is limited almost strictly to playing occasionally for themselves or, if asked, their friends. But, as mentioned by Buddy Durham, this is very rarely.

Summary

The uses of blues have clearly been affected by the social and economic changes that have occurred in black American culture over the past fifty years. The great shift in black population from the rural South with its agrarian economic system to the urban, industrialized, North has had a great impact on the uses of

blues. With economic conditions as tough as they were in the South, much effort had to be expended simply on survival. This meant that the majority of the blues musicians were forced to keep their art as no more than a hobby. Their main efforts, as with the rest of the black population, were directed towards working and providing themselves and their families with a living. Blues musicians, for the most part, were laborers first and musicians second.

After their economic obligations were met, then part of their spare time could be devoted to performing. Sometimes they played for their own enjoyment, but more importantly, they served as music-makers for the once, or occasionally twice, weekly frolics. As with the rest of the black community, the frolics were an important event in the eyes of musicians. Their participation in these events allowed them special status in the community, albeit not a particularly financially rewarding one. The community recognized them as musicians, much as they might recognize an especially talented buck-dancer or storyteller.

The movement to the cities of the North necessitated a shift in the uses of blues. The economic and social fabric was different. In the country, there had been a community where events were planned and brought about by group cooperation. This was manifested by activities like helping neighbors at harvest time, or the Saturday night frolic. The city presented a different situation. The grocery store partially replaced the vegetable patch and hunting. In turn, the bars and nightclubs replaced the frolic.

Certainly, the North had its enticements. There was more freedom, of a kind, in the North. The people felt that the oppression of racism was not as strong up North. Jobs promised higher salaries and an escape from working on the land. Many followed the paths which led to the Northern urban areas, and, in moving, they did discover differences.

Wages were higher, true enough, but the cost of living was much higher too. People were often forced into living in squalid crowded apartments where living could not have been much more pleasant than the poverty they had known in the South. Also, the emigrant was thrust in a specialist role. He was placed in a job and virtually all of the money he made was distributed among a network of others who provided him with all sorts of services necessary to his existence. Specialists took over many of the services that had previously been taken care of by certain individuals or the community.

Like other aspects of life, the uses of blues were affected by the changes wrought by the move North. The local bar replaced the frolic, and the bar was accessible seven days a week. Since the older style country blues were no longer a popular musical form, except among a certain segment of the black community, the bars were

not eager to hire solo musicians or even small groups who performed in this manner.

It would seem that blues musicians were quite affected by extraneous forces. When social acceptance of their music was high, they would play whenever it was economically possible, that is, when they could spare the time from work. However when their music fell out of social acceptance and their economic prospects were slightly improved, they played little.

In most cases, the musicians themselves were still interested in playing, and did so for their own enjoyment or for friends. Some of the older ways of life, blues being my case in point, still appealed to older residents who, not suprisingly, wished to retain their roots. This is exemplified by the "guitar parties" held initially by Buddy Durham and his friends. Gradually though, blacks became accustomed to the urban way of life, accepting its values and institutions. This would have happened more quickly to the younger blacks who had fewer ties with the southern way of living. It would be even easier for those born in the North whose connections with prior life styles and values would come through parents or older kin. As Beals and Hoijer point out: "the folk represent an archaic way of life, the city the modern way."¹⁵

As these changes did occur and the older traditions were left to the past, country blues musicians, in many cases, ceased to perform actively. After a few years, Buddy Durham did not play publicly and since 1961 he has not even owned a guitar. No audience was available, therefore there was no public stimulus. Aaron Washington, C. D. Dobbs and Buddy Durham all felt that music was principally the domain of the young, and they were content to let the newer trends and younger musicians take over.

In conclusion, it would appear that the uses of blues have been influenced by social changes more decisively than by economic stresses, although the former have heavily affected the latter, of course. While there was a general upward economic mobility, this trend had little affect on how the older blues styles were used in the community. The shift from the rural community, with its emphasis on group cooperation and part-time musicianship, to the urban centers where specialists took over many of the functions which previously had been provided by kinship or community groups, was more important. It was at this point, where bars and nightclubs became the focal point for live musical entertainment, and the musical tastes of the public were evolving along with the dramatic social changes, that the uses of blues shifted, and have remained to the present day in the Northern cities.

Footnotes

1. Paul Oliver. The Story of the Blues (New York City; Chilton; 1969) p. 125
2. Paul Oliver. Conversation with the Blues (New York City; Horizon Press, 1965) p. 39
3. Samuel Charters. The Bluesmen (New York City; Oak Publications, 1967) pp. 54-55
4. Ibid., p. 54
5. Oliver. The Story of the Blues p. 74
6. "Larry Johnson", interviewed by Tom Pomposello, Living Blues #16 (1974) p. 16
7. Mike Rowe. Chicago Breakdown (London; Eddison Press, 1973) p. 114
8. Ibid., p. 27
9. Ibid., p. 27
10. Ibid., p. 26
11. Alan P. Merriam. The Anthopology of Music (Chicago; Northwestern University Press, 1964) p. 210
12. Ralph Beals & Harry Hoijer. An Introduction to Anthropology (New York City; Macmillan Co., 1971) p. 210
13. Merriam, p. 227
14. William Ferris. Blues from the Delta (London; Studio Vista Limited, 1970) p. 93
15. Beals & Hoijer, p. 224

Interviews and Dates

1. Edward "Buddy" Durham - 15 July 1974 Albany, New York
2. Aaron Washington - 19 July 1974 Albany, New York
3. William "Fats" Jefferson - 28 July 1974 Albany, New York
4. C. D. Dobbs - 5 August 1974 Schenectady, New York

-- Greensboro, No. Carolina

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ABSTRACTS OF ACADEMIC DISSERTATIONS

WOODY GUTHRIE AND THE AMERICAN FOLK SONG

Edwin COHEN, Ph.D.
University of Southern California, 1971

Chairman: Professor Bolton

The study traced the history of the American folk song from its inception in the colonial period to its present state, emphasizing the period of the 1930s and 1940s. It recorded the historical, sociological, and artistic influences that led to the tradition which Woody Guthrie participated in and altered.

After placing Guthrie in his historical perspective, the study then analyzed three groups of his songs, dividing them according to their communicative function. The first group were basically reportorial and dealt with specific events and personalities that touched the composer. The second group consisted of songs which protest and cry out against injustices in our society. The third group celebrated and praised some aspect of our nation or society. Each of the songs was examined for its *persona*, its message, its language, and its tone. From this analysis an interpretation suitable for performance was formulated. The analysis and interpretation were based solely on artistic considerations with no biographical or sociological judgments being implicit or explicit.

The study concluded that Guthrie was important in the American oral tradition because he was instrumental in the expansion and popularization of folk music through his utilization of the electronic media and because of his influence on successive generations of folk song composers. It further concluded that his most important contribution was his artistic use of the folk tradition to communicate his sentiments, ideas, and emotions, with his songs standing as the product of his artistry and the buttress upon which his reputation rests.

Order No. 72-11,913, 203 pages

JOHN A. LOMAX'S COWBOY SONGS AND OTHER FRONTIER BALLADS: A CRITICAL STUDY

CLAYTON, Lawrence Ray, Ph.D.
Texas Tech University, 1974

Chairman: Dr. Everett A. Gillis

Analysis of the one hundred fifty-two song texts in John A. Lomax's pioneer collection of Western folk songs, Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads (1916 edition), reveals that the majority concern cowboy life and activities -- roundups, trail drives, range life -- and the cowboy's basic attitudes toward his work, women, religion, death, and life after death. Other phenomena of frontier life not so fully represented concern soldiers, mountain men, Texas Rangers, outlaws, Mormons, immigrants, settlers, and miners. Also included in the collection are more general songs broadly reflective of life in the United States as a whole. Although the cowboy himself and other representative types on the frontier are generally romanticized, the songs in the collection offer a realistic view of the social and cultural conditions of life on the Trans-Mississippi West frontier, depicting in abundant detail the hardships of frontier life and the attitudes of the frontiersman toward his lot. Prosodically the pieces in Lomax's collection reflect rather thoroughly the familiar simplicity of style and metrical roughness characterizing American folk songs generally. Typically, their manner of presentation is direct and usually free of extraneous detail, and includes both narrative and lyric experience. Lomax's collection is of particular importance since it served to capture in print the songs of the American West that might otherwise have been lost.

Order No. 74-23,040, 427 pages.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE SUN SESSION FILES, by Martin Hawkins and Colin Escott (Available from authors at: 229 Godinton Road, Ashford, Kent, England). Discography, Volumes I through VI, paperback.

Perhaps no recording studio was ever more involved in furthering the production of a changing musical mood than was the Memphis-based Sam Phillips Recording Studios during the 1950s and, to some extent, into the early 1960s. The Phillips studios served as a location for recording blues singers from Beale Street and other predominantly black areas. These masters were then leased to established labels in Memphis and Chicago. Later Phillips brought forth his own Sun label and its companion, Phillips-International. During these early years recording information was almost non-existent or at best, amounted to a few lines in a personal journal intended only for future personal reference. Indeed, no thought was given then of detailed session material, let alone that some day someone would publish a discography on the labels.

For a time I attempted such a project but became thoroughly frustrated with the minimal availability of detailed information and my own lack of proper time to pursue the research. My main concern was the omission of actual session dates, session personnel, etc. I had hoped that with the advent of the purchase of the Sun masters by the Shelby Singleton Corporation in 1969 that additional session material would be forthcoming. It was not.

Finally someone happened along equipped with the time and genuine interest in Sun Records to compile the much needed and long awaited in-depth discography. This has now been accomplished by two Englishmen, Martin Hawkins and Colin Escott. If one thing has been learned from my own Sun research it is that rock and roll music has never really died in England. The followers of the so-called "Sun Legend" are just as numerous today as during the '50s and early '60s. In fact, the Sun Record Company is the only label known to me to ever have had a fan club devoted to its entire roster of artists. So it seems not all together unnatural that two Englishmen should put together such a comprehensive recording history of such an important label.

The source of information, according to Hawkins, came basically from the files of the American Federation of Musicians and Sam Phillips' own personal notebooks kept from 1950 through 1958. Beginning in 1958 more detailed discographical data was kept. In addition, much of the material was corroborated by personal interviews with over 100 artists and sidemen of the Sun days. It is not difficult to understand why it took Hawkins and Escott several trips to the States over a three year period to accomplish their goal.

Volume One - The Sun Session File on Jerry Lee Lewis and Billy Riley: This first volume examines not only their own sessions but also those sessions of other Sun artists on which they appeared as "studio-musicians". The in-depth information is restricted on Lewis for the period before 1958 because of the lack of proper session data. Even some of the later sessions suffer from incomplete session personnel and only partial recording dates, certainly not a fault of the authors but a result of insufficient information kept and provided for them. An insight into the financial arrangements at Sun during the early days is best shown in the transcript of an interview with Billy Riley at the end of this first volume. Riley mentions the rate of only \$2.00 per session as one of the reasons he quit Sun; but when Hawkins said the files of the musicians union showed \$10.00 as a minimum rate, Riley replied "with the small companies a lot goes on that the unions don't hear about". One of the highlights of this first booklet is the information given regarding a session by the "Million Dollar Quartet", Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins and Elvis Presley.

Volume Two - Country Music in Memphis: This booklet features the sessions of Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Warren Smith and Charlie Feathers. It is interesting to note that the Cash title, I COULDN'T KEEP FROM CRYING, is not found in the session information. Marshall Grant and Luther Perkins also appear sparingly as session musicians for Warren Smith and Jack Earls. A

large portion of this booklet is devoted to the sessions of a number of the lesser known Sun artists.

Volume Three - A Complete Sun Label Rock Discography: This volume includes Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison and Sonny Burgess along with additional sessions of other minor Sun artists. Followers of Presley will find precise information about his Sun days that heretofore had only been assumed.

Volume Four - The Sun Blues Sessions 1950-1967: This booklet is unique in and of itself. As mentioned previously, before the advent of the Sun label, the Sam Phillips Recording Studios served as an independent studio either selling or leasing masters to some of the blues and black labels in the mid-west. The names of Chess, Crown, RPM, Arhoolie and Checker appear throughout this volume; as do the names of Howling Wolf, B.B. King, Ike Turner, Rufus Thomas and Joe Hill Louis. As one would suspect the actual session dates for much of this material are incomplete, in some cases only giving a year, while at other times simply "u/k date". At one time Shelby Singleton had planned to release some of this material on his "Midnight Sun" label. It is unfortunate that to date only two singles have appeared on this label.

Volume Five - Sun File on Charlie Rich and Carl Mann: With the popularity of Rich over the last few years much of this Phillips-International material has been re-issued. A complete listing of sessions on which he served as backup musician is included and as such a portion of this volume is devoted to minor Sun artists.

Volume Six - Memphis into the Sixties: This final volume covers the sessions of Bill Justis as well as being an index volume for the series. Also included are a number of pages of corrections and additions. The end-papers are copies of Memphis Federation of Musicians session contracts and serve to whet the appetite for more of the same.

After a careful study of the material, and speaking from a strictly personal discographic viewpoint, a number of criticisms come to mind. Although the general format is quite clear and acceptable I wonder if perhaps a better overall perspective would not have been achieved if the sessions were put in chronological order and not solely by artist, but following with a complete index. However, due to the lack of some clearly defined session dates more confusion could prevail than as it now stands. Having been spoiled by the JEMFQ policy of listing session dates, followed by session personnel and then the song titles it is a little difficult to adjust to the song titles, followed by session musicians and then recording dates.

However, perhaps the most important critical aspect I can find is the rather incomplete listing of the released material. This has been done for the most part with the artists that had a limited number of releases on Sun. But after working with the Sun/Sun International material myself, I would have found a cross-reference of master numbers to be helpful, along with the number of each single and extended-play and/or long-play album on which the master was used.

All these are minor points to be sure when looking at the total accomplishment. With the exception of Brian Rust's major discography, The Victor Master Book, Martin Hawkins and Colin Escott have put together here what is probably the best in-depth history, through session material, on any label yet. Although intended as only "supplements" to a more detailed history of Sun Records and Sun Recording artists to be published under the title Catalyst these booklets could stand alone as an excellent recording history. (Catalyst will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of JEMFQ).

In closing this review I'd just like to say that this excellent series of discography booklets also draws attention to the need, for record companies and discographers alike, to strive for the most complete data on recording sessions possible, and the extreme need to contact living artists about remaining questions, rather than having to make assumptions or omit entirely major points that might be pertinent to a discographic listing.

John L. Smith
Des Moines, Iowa

HILLBILLY WOMEN, by Kathy Kahn (New York: Doubleday & Co. 1973) 151 pp; text, photos; & appendix; \$7.95 (also available in Avon paperback #20602, \$.25)

In the last decade or so there have been several close-up sociological studies published about Appalachian mountain communities, notably H. M. Caudill's Night Comes to the Cumberlands, and John Fetterman's Stinking Creek, to name two in particular. Caudill's appeared in the early sixties and was written in the spirit of portrayal of conditions, followed by a presentation of constructive proposals for the betterment of conditions, so that Washington's "War on Poverty" might take note. Five years later, in 1967, Fetterman focussed on particular individuals in a named specific area, presenting a written/photographic portrait of an Appalachian community. It seemed, then, almost logical that five years later (at a time when the voices of ethnic and regional minorities, including that minority known as women were beginning to be heard) that a book such as Kathy Kahn's Hillbilly Women would be written.

Ms. Kahn herself a resident of North Georgia, gives the reader seventeen different views of various Appalachian women hailing from communities in the eight states comprising Southern Appalachia. The chapters are in the form of edited interviews, with Kahn's own observations and insights noted in different typeface, preceding and interspersed with each interview. At the book's center appears a telling collection of nineteen black and white photographs of the women interviewed, posing in their various living and working situations.

The interviews, themselves, portray the women's lives in the mills, in coal mine camps, as workers in the garment factories, as the wives (or widows) of crippled (or deceased) coal miners, and as labor organizers. Some of the women are young; some are old; some are living still in their birthplace; some are of the many migrants who moved north to urban centers in Ohio.

Aside from presenting a strictly sociological view of Appalachian women, Hillbilly Women ties in with an important genre of music and song emanating from Appalachia; namely, labor organizing songs. This would make Ms. Kahn's book of possible interest to those who may want to know about other women who moved, worked and created in the spirit of the more well-known Aunt Molly Jackson and Sarah Ogan Gunning. In particular, the several mentions of Ella Mae Wiggins, and the chapter that deals with Florence Reece ("They Say Them Child Brides Don't Last") are of interest. Florence, who, along with her husband Sam, authored the song "Which Side Are You On", was an organizer of miners in Eastern Kentucky, and her interview speaks vividly of the starvation, company stores, and gun thugs that made up her everyday reality, and of her role as songwriter.

Kathy Kahn's format for presenting each interview is in a musical context as well, which isn't surprising, since she is an accomplished musician and songwriter herself (and along with her husband Si, has published other specifically music related items, such as their booklet, Mountain Music and Where to Find It). She begins each of the three subdivisions of Hillbilly Women with entire texts of songs (Gunning's "I Am a Girl of Constant Sorrow", Wiggins' "Mill Mother's Lament" and her own "Blue Ridge Mountain Refugees".) In addition, each chapter begins with epigraphic excerpts from songs penned by the Kahns', obviously (and in most cases, effectively) used as tone-setters for the interview that follows.

Though fascinating and elucidating in most areas, it seems that perhaps more could have been done with the subject of the mountain women in Appalachia. Certainly the strengths, hopes, sorrow sorrows and struggles of these women are well-portrayed in their very own words of the interviews, as well as their own feelings of active worth and participation in a potentially hostile environment. Yet, the feeling was, at points, that Ms. Kahn's own comments and observations bordered on viewing Appalachian women's strength and perserverance as miraculous and unexpected phenomena, rather than the outgrowth of years of dealing with hard and next-to-morbid conditions of living and working. The reviewer's implication is not that mountain women are, somehow, naturally liberated due to their trying to cope with a hard life; rather that it should seem no more surprising that a woman from a mining camp in Virginia would be an active and participating force in bringing about social change in her life-surroundings, than it is for a woman reared and bred in a middle-class college lifestyle.

This is no major criticism, however; Hillbilly Women's use of edited interview is most likely the most effective and truthful technique of portraying these women as they really are, and in dispelling many of the common stereotypes that all of us harbor when visualizing mountain women. It would seem that as a second addition to the serious literature dealing with the women of Appalachia, a more in-depth study on one or two women would be a worthy contribution.

As a sociology/women's studies book, Hillbilly Women is a good beginning (hopefully Kahn will write more on this subject; in particular, focussing on Appalachian women involved in music.) And as a music/women-in-labor-movements volume, Hillbilly Women is a worthy supplementary work that can be placed next to Green's Only a Miner and Greenway's American Folksongs of Protest, giving a fuller picture of the souls and minds of the women who work, write, live and sing in Appalachian communities.

Patty Hall
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BILL MONROE AND HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS: AN ILLUSTRATED DISCOGRAPHY, by Neil V. Rosenberg (Nashville: The Country Music Foundation Press, 1974), 120 pp., \$3.50 paperbound.

To those seriously interested in bluegrass, the name Neil Rosenberg is a familiar one, as either a musician, fan, or scholar. Bill Monroe and his Blue Grass Boys: An Illustrated Discography is, I suspect, the result of the last two, with varying degrees of each coming to the fore at different times. Introductory remarks, a discussion of format, a brief biographical sketch of Bill Monroe, and a discussion of Monroe as a "Country Recording Artist," provide an introduction to both Monroe and the discography that follows. The main section of the book consists of discographies of each of the three labels Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys have recorded for (RCA Victor, Columbia, and Decca/MCA) with introductory essays prefacing each. Following is an "Other Label" discussion and discography which deals primarily with the disputed 1962 Capitol session with Rose Maddox that produced the album Rose Maddox Sings Bluegrass (Capitol T1799); the 1969 performances for the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife; and the 1974 appearance on Lester Flatt's Vanderbilt University album (RCA Victor APL1-0588). The book is completed by an alphabetical index of song titles and is illustrated throughout by 37 photographs of Monroe's life and career, some of the photographs familiar, others more unusual. The photographs themselves are actually a large part of the book, accounting for slightly less than one-third of the pages. In fact, for the most part, each page of discography, and many in the other sections, is offset with photographs on the facing page which, although spreading out the discography itself, enhances both appearance and readability. Photographs of most of the major recording and performing bands are included, and though the photographic quality varies greatly, as does their familiarity, they are in themselves very informative, useful documents on Monroe's career and in general a nice feature of the book.

The biographical sections are, just as the author titles them, brief "sketches," giving an outline of Monroe's life and career. The biography is not, nor is it meant to be, the complete story of Monroe. It is meant rather to give a brief historical basis for understanding the discography, and this it does. However, the author's enthusiasm and admiration for Monroe and his music, which which obviously are responsible for the book's existence in the first place, are seemingly also responsible for some statements made as fact in the biography with which the reader, and this reviewer, might disagree: for example, that "Uncle Pen" is "one of the finest bluegrass songs ever written," (p. 46) or that, in a time when yodeling by such artists as Wilf Carter, Hank Snow, Elton Britt, and others was popular, Monroe's yodeling on his early Victor recordings could "establish Monroe's reputation as one of the best" (p. 27); these are at least questionable. This feeling, which may in part stem from Dr. Rosenberg's close association with Monroe, seems to be prevalent throughout most writings on the "Father of Bluegrass." Among the important areas which seem to be repeatedly glossed over in most works are Monroe's use of pseudonyms in composer credits, the breakup of the Monroe Brothers, and the facts behind the Rose Maddox session. The first is

briefly mentioned in the present work. In regard to the latter, even Dr. Rosenberg states at one time that he has "incomplete data on one recording session in which Monroe participated in 1962--the Rose Maddox recording with the Reno and Smiley band," (p. 51) which he calls "an anonymous appearance with Rose Maddox," (p. 109) and later that "indeed the Capitol Rose Maddox session is known to include Monroe only through hearsay and aural evidence--he is not listed as one of the musicians on the liner notes to the L. P." (p. 109). Liner notes, however, are not always known for their accuracy or completeness, especially unsigned ones such as in this case, and particularly when conflicting companies and contracts are involved. In fact, Monroe not only participated in the recording, but it was at his suggestion that the project was even undertaken. Obviously Monroe's participation is not a startling new discovery, it is certainly something which many people (including Rosenberg) have been aware of, or have at least taken for granted. However, why Rosenberg has chosen to be so evasive and indirect with the facts on this area is certainly a mystery. With respect to the break with Charlie Monroe, there have been explanations ranging from those similar to Rosenberg's that "both were ambitious and hard working; both felt he could do better on his own," (p. 17) to rumors of jealousy, knife fights, and wrestling matches. These points are not necessarily mentioned to detract from the present book, whose main focus is obviously discographical rather than biographical and therefore out of its stated purpose and scope (with the exception of the Rose Maddox information), but rather as a comment on the existing sources (from some of which Rosenberg draws material) and what seems to be a common fault among them, as well as in hopes of influencing future ones. Also, regardless of the book's main purpose, the author does in fact devote a rather large portion of the book to such matters, and further because just as there is a need for discographical information on Monroe as well as others (which this book greatly helps satisfy), there is an equal need for thorough, objective biographical studies.

The most valuable non-discographical comments are those which preface the discographies themselves. These discussions give insight into the context in which the songs were recorded, both in relation to what was happening in Monroe's band and others recording at the same time, and point out important, significant, and interesting events or peculiarities which occurred for or within the band during each of the periods. Much of this type of information can of course really only come from the compilation and analysis of such a discography. These individual label introductions, as well as the essay preceding the discography section as a whole--Monroe as a "Country Recording Artist"--accomplish their purpose of providing a link between the discography itself and the actual recordings or sound.

The discography itself, which accounts for another third of the book's total, deals with the recordings of Bill Monroe from 1940 until 1974, with or without the presence of the Blue Grass Boys (given the Rose Maddox data as basically accurate and acknowledging Monroe's participation). Here, however, is where a main contradiction in, and the only real objective to, the discography are found. The emphasis throughout is on Monroe as an individual performer. While this in itself, of course, is not a fault, without the inclusion of the Monroe Brothers recordings the discography cannot be, as stated in the introduction, "as complete a discography for the recordings of one performer, Bill Monroe, as can be compiled at present." (p. 1) The Monroe Brothers material is admittedly pre-Blue Grass Boys (and even pre-bluegrass); however, with the stated purpose in mind, the omission is both sizable and questionable. Also, regarding the reasoning behind publishing a discography which will soon be incomplete, Rosenberg states that "it is important to gather and present data on the earlier recordings of Monroe while it *sic* is still available" (p. 2) (referring to the early recordings of Monroe with the Blue Grass Boys). Rosenberg later notes that one of his main interests in Monroe is his use of traditional songs and, knowing the "important role of print and recordings in Anglo-American Folksong traditions," he wanted "to learn more about the ways in which Bill Monroe fitted into these traditions as a conserver, carrier, and initiator of tradition." (p. 5) Certainly nothing in Monroe's life could have had a stronger influence on these traits and on Monroe's conception of bluegrass and what he wanted it to be than his early career with Charlie Monroe, and if the importance of gathering data "while it is still available" holds true for recordings made in 1940, it must certainly be true for those made in 1936. The discography, then, is one of recordings in which Monroe participated between 7 October 1940 and 19 March 1974, inclusive, and as such is excellent. The discography presents the following

information, when known: date, time and place (town, state, and studio) of recording, titles, master numbers, copyright credit, single record numbers, E. P. and L. P. numbers and titles, vocal part identification, musicians and instruments, and a chronological listing of release dates of singles, E. P. s and L. P. s. The data are given by label, each being divided into numbered sessions with the information (place, time, etc.) listed for each in columns across the page. The layout of the pages in these sections allows an amazing amount of information to be presented in a relatively compact form without sacrificing clarity, an admirable accomplishment in itself, and a great asset to the book's usefulness.

Anyone interested in bluegrass is necessarily interested in Bill Monroe and his recordings, and this book is a valuable and useful source to that end. One fact that becomes increasingly clear after using the book (and it can be used to answer many questions concerning Monroe's recording career that have arisen--no, Don Reno never recorded with the Blue Grass Boys, but, interestingly, Joe Stuart has recorded with Monroe playing every instrument except mandolin) is that apart from precious few other works, such as Rosenberg's own on the Osborne Brothers which appeared in the earlier years of Bluegrass Unlimited, nothing else as complete and thorough as this has been published within the field of bluegrass. Overall, the main problems, it seems to me, stem from the particular combination of fan and scholar aspects in an attempt, I suspect, to appeal to both. The discography is very efficient and thorough, even beyond the interest of a casual fan, while the biography, on the other hand, is a bit too fan-oriented in its approach and content to supersede the material already available, and falls into the common praise-filled mood of most articles written on Monroe, without really offering anything new in this area. It does, however, give those who are relatively unfamiliar with the history of Bill Monroe a good start. Furthermore the publication problem and the more limited appeal and salability of just a discography must also be considered. The strength of the book, and this outweighs any of the complaints, lies in the discographies and accompanying essays, their completeness, and the value and accessibility of the information presented. One soon finds oneself with the book in hand at least near-by whenever listening to Monroe's recordings. Hopefully the present work will serve as both impetus and, in these respects, model for future undertakings of this sort.

Due, I would guess, to a printing error, in two of the four copies I have seen the caption for the top photo on page 40 read: "Don Reno, Monroe, Joel Price, cowboy film star Sunset Carson, Joel Price, Bill Monroe, and Don Reno," and should be corrected to "Don Reno, Monroe, Joel Price, cowboy film star Sunset Carson, Benny Martin, and Jackie Phelps." I assume a similar error is responsible for the listing of banjoist Curtis McPeake as a second guitarist (with Carl Butler) for Decca session 36 on page 73, as aural evidence confirms the presence of a banjo on the four sides recorded at that session. With regard to the Rose Maddox data, I believe that the steel player was Wayne Gailey, not Ralph Mooney as listed, although Mooney was a frequent steel guitarist for Rose Maddox. Gailey had been associated with Miss Maddox for about a year at the time, traveling with her to Nashville for the session (reportedly to the disdain of some of the other participants) and can be heard on eight cuts on the L. P. with solos on six of them. Of the five songs listed by Rosenberg on the "Monroe" side, besides "Footprints in the Snow" Gailey is also audible on "Uncle Pen." The recording took place over two days with Monroe participating on the first day, then leaving and being replaced on the second day by Donna Stoneman. Therefore the date for the cuts on which Monroe played would be the first of the two possibilities Rosenberg gives, namely 19 March. To the Decca E. P. listing on page 105 should be added: ED 2753--Blue Ridge Mountain Blues/Big Sandy River/How Will I Explain About You/Danny Boy.

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JEMF QUARTERLY

JOHN EDWARDS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



VOL. XI, PART 2

SUMMER 1975

No. 38

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HENRY WHITTER: HIS LIFE AND MUSIC

By Norm Cohen

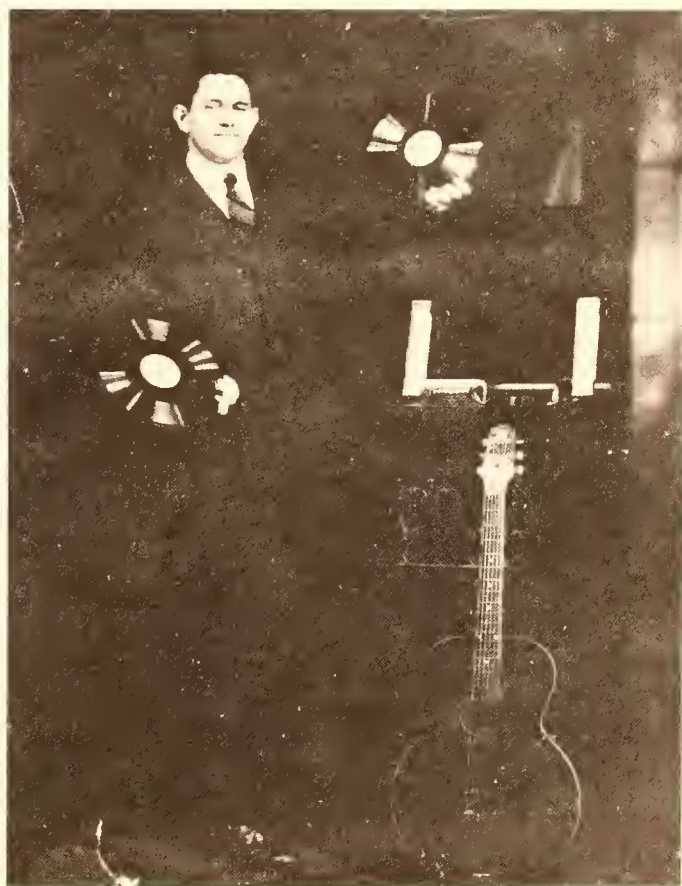
In his brochure notes to Rounder Records' reissue LP of Fiddlin' John Carson's recordings (Rounder 1003), Mark Wilson expressed his doubts "that there would be a great deal of interest today in early Henry Whitter reissue." Yet that Carson LP has been greeted enthusiastically. Why the difference between these two early pioneer Okeh recording artists? Both played key roles in the early development of the hillbilly recording industry, both were quite popular in their day. The answer, of course, lies principally in Henry Whitter's music itself, and to this I shall return later. Aesthetics aside, though, Whitter deserves as much attention as his more revered colleague, to which end the following comments and discography are offered.

In August of 1961, Archie Green, accompanied by Ed Kahn visited Henry Whitter's son and widow, to learn what they could of Whitter's life and early involvement in the music business. Green's findings played an important part in the story he reconstructed about the beginnings of hillbilly music,¹ but Whitter himself was never the subject of a full article. For this summary I have taken the liberty of drawing extensively on Green's own field notes and other materials he collected; this is practically the only available source on Whitter's story.

William Henry Whitter was born on 6 April 1892, in Grayson County, near what is now Fries, Virginia. His schooling ended with the sixth grade, and he went to work in the Fries Washington Mill. While making his living in the cotton mills, he began to take up musical instruments, and by the time he was married at the age of twenty, he already had been playing guitar, banjo, fiddle, harmonica, piano, and organ. His mother had an old cylinder machine, and Henry enjoyed recordings of Uncle Josh. Though Henry was a good millhand, the work did not satisfy him; from his youth he always had sought fame, and he turned to music as his means of achieving it. He took to singing and playing his guitar and harmonica in and around Fries, performing songs well-known in that area, though sometimes with his own alterations.

One day, in about 1914, Henry learned from a fellow millhand by the name of Frank Burnett a ballad about a rail disaster involving

the Southern Railroad's "97" that had occurred eleven years previously near Danville, Virginia, about 100 miles to the east of where Henry had grown up. Burnett himself had learned the ballad from the two young men who composed it shortly after the accident, Charles Weston Noell and Fred Jackson Lewey. The ballad was widely sung around southern Virginia and North Carolina for some time, but gradually its popularity waned, through a handful of singers continued to preserve its memory for years afterward until they had a chance to record it in the mid-1920s. In 1923 Henry Whitter became the first to record it, using the title, "The Wreck of the Southern Old 97." Released on Okeh 40015, that recording went on to make musical as well as legal history. Some of Whitter's own comments on his song were



noted at the court trial that later took place when the authorship of the ballad was contested; two pages from the trial transcript are reproduced in this article.

In 1923, Whitter had saved up some money for a journey to the General Phonograph Company's New York offices to make some recordings. Just what it was that prompted him to make this trip is an unanswered question in the history of country music. Furthermore, the date of his first trip is open to argument. It was Whitter's contention--as evidenced in the court testimony shown here, that he was called to New York by the Company in March of 1923 to make some recordings. On the other hand, there is no doubt that Henry's first issued records were recorded in December 1923 (see discography following this article). According to one contemporary journalist's account, Henry went to New York once in vain before he was given an opportunity to record. Archie Green's own analysis of those events, based on interviews with many of the persons involved at the time, was that test recordings made in March 1923 were promptly shelved and forgotten, and not until Fiddlin' John Carson's initial release of August 1923 made a hit was a second thought given to Henry Whitter's trial re-

cordings of the previous spring. This reconstruction may well be correct, but for the modification that the March recordings were never actually released; rather Whitter was called back to the studios to have another try at the same or possibly different titles.

As for whether Whitter had been invited on his first trip or had made the trip on his own, it seems more in character with what else we know about him that he took it upon himself to journey to New York. Furthermore, Whitter was the first person from the Galax area to record; there had been no recording activity there, and no company scouts had visited the area, so it is difficult to believe that the General Phonograph Company would have sought him out. As his widow and son recalled, Henry carefully saved money out of his wages to make the trip north, much to the derision of his fellow mill workers.

After the December trip, at which time at least nine numbers were recorded, two tunes were selected for release early in 1924: "Wreck on the Southern Old 97" coupled with "Lonesome Road Blues." For each side he recorded, Henry was paid \$25, but he later told one journalist that he soon had received some \$23,000 in royalties



Henry Whitter (guitar) and George Banman Grayson. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution.

for the one song about Old 97. A few months after that recording was released, Vernon Dalhart heard it, copied the words from Henry's singing as best he could understand them, and recorded the song for Edison in May. In August, not satisfied with the sales on the Edison disc, Dalhart persuaded the Victor Talking Machine Co. to record it, and (coupled with "The Prisoner's Song") Dalhart became responsible for the first million selling country music hit. I have elsewhere discussed in detail the events leading up to the lengthy litigation between David Graves George and Victor, the former claiming to have composed the ballad about Old 97 and therefore to be entitled to royalties; the latter arguing that George could not have been the author, but rather that Lewey and Noell were.² I will not repeat that story here; but in focusing on Whitter's role in those events it is appropriate to note that Whitter himself was credited with authorship of the ballad on the first copyright claim filed by a publishing house owned by Okeh's executive, Fred Hager. After the Victor recording by Dalhart was released, Victor paid Hager \$3,500 for all rights to the ballad, and Whitter sold to Hager for \$1,000 all his rights, including mechanical, to the song. The second of these bills of sale is reproduced here.

Henry Whitter began to enjoy a measure of fame and fortune as his recording career continued. Thirteen of his records were released in 1924, and the next year he bought himself a new Model T Ford. In addition to recording as a solo artist, Henry accompanied fellow millhand Kelly Harrell once in 1925; and that same year he accompanied Roba Stanley, one of the first female country singers to record. In 1930 he recorded with Fisher Hendley's Aristocratic Pigs. In 1924 he put together one of the first stringbands to make records: Whitter's Virginia Breakdowners, with Henry on guitar, John Rector, banjo, and James Sutphin, fiddle. But his most successful musical partnership was with blind fiddler George Banman Grayson, from Laurel Bloomery, Tennessee, just a few miles from the corner where Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia meet. Grayson and Whitter recorded several times between 1927 and 1929 for both Starr Piano Co. and Victor; it was at these sessions that some of Whitter's finest

work was captured for a phonograph audience. Grayson, some twenty years Whitter's senior, was killed in a road accident in about 1935, and Henry never got over the loss of his friend and partner. Though he was still singing and playing in 1939, he was not well, and on 10 November 1941, he died in the Morganton, North Carolina hospital of diabetes.

During his recording career, some 55 solo pieces by Whitter were recorded and released, and almost as many selections on which he was accompanied by, or accompanied, other

Henry Whitter, Okeh Artist, Real Hill Country Type

Big City Holds No Lure for Singer From Hills of Virginia—On Visits Trip From Station to Hotel to Laboratories Is Enough

Henry Whitter, exclusive Okeh artist, was a recent visitor to New York, where he was engaged in making several new records of "Hill" country music.

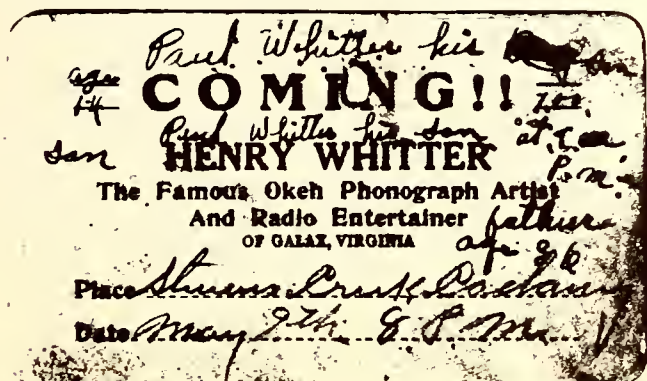


Henry Whitter

Mr. Whitter is a real specimen of the Hill country, coming from Galax, Va., and on his first few trips to New York could not be induced to stay over night, coming in to the city in the morning, making what recordings were necessary and leaving before midnight arrived. Although he has overcome this shyness to some extent, he is still averse to what might be called "seeing the town." He insists that his trips from the railway station to the hotel and thence to the recording laboratories are sights enough for him. On his present visits to this city he divides his time between the laboratories and the room of his hotel practicing.

Mr. Whitter sings the old-time tunes of the Hill country, many of them of his own composition. He plays his own accompaniment on the guitar with incidental music on the harmonica. He is renowned as a musician for dancing in the Hill country, playing continuously throughout the night on many occasions. His Okeh records have a big following throughout the country and he receives many inquiries at his home in Galax for copies of the numbers which he sings on the records.

Above: From Talking Machine World,
15 May 1925, p. 35.



artists. His repertoire was a good cross section of southern folksong in the 1920s: 3 or 4 ballads of British origin, ("George Collins," "Butcher Boy," "With His Overshoes and Leggins") several harmonica instrumentals ("Old Time Fox Chase," "Lost Train Blues"), native American ballads and songs that originated near Whitter's native part of Virginia ("Sydney Allen," "Ellen Smith," "New River Train," "The Explosion at Eccles, West Virginia," "Wreck on the Southern Old '97"), minstrel and coon songs from the 19th century ("Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy," "Watermelon Hanging on the Vine"), a few late 19th century sentimental pieces ("Love Me While

I Am Living," "Put My Little Shoes Away," "Go Bury Me Beneath the Willow"), and some piece from World War I ("The Kaiser and Uncle Sam") or later. A few homiletic numbers were recorded but no hymns, gospel songs or spirituals. Although he is supposed to have been able to play many instruments, he used only guitar and harmonica on his recordings. His harmonica playing was, from the beginning, competent, but his guitar work was often deficient. Much of the time the instrument was out of tune; he frequently played wrong chords, and, especially during the early years, his technique was confined to a simple strumming across the strings, with an

Henry Whitter

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A. Not exactly. Around about 15 years ago, I guess.

Q. Did you ever sing that song?

A. Yes, I sing it.

Q. Did you prepare a version of that song of your own?

A. Well, I placed several words in the song, and during the verses to make the song rhyme, also to make it rhyme in a peppy tune, using the tune of "The Ship that Never Returned."

Q. What did you do with that tune, did you change it?

A. I changed the tune to a certain extent, made it more peppy.

Q. When was this?

A. Well, it was about 1922.

Q. 1922?

A. Yes.

Q. At that time were you familiar with the words of the song that you say you had heard ever since 1914?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you change the words that you had been familiar with, or not?

A. Well, a certain part of it I changed, not exactly knowing the words.

Q. That is, you tried to recall what you had heard, and "you put in you own words?"

A. That's right.

Q. How did you start your song?

A. I started with "They give him his orders at Monroe, Virginia, saying 'Steve, you're way behind time'."

Q. Had you ever heard any other singer before you start there?

A. No, sir. I had not.

Q. I will ask you if you recognize that as it is. (Handing a sheet of paper to witness).

A. Yes, sir. This is just like I fixed it up and got it together.

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Henry Whitter

Q. Now I believe you said you changed a few words here and there to make it rhyme better?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Would you mind indicating just what words you did change on this exhibit that has been referred to? (Handing witness Exhibit D-3.)

A. "Steve Brooklyn" was one.

Q. What was in the song as he had it?

A. I never did know.

Q. You don't remember what name he used?

A. No.

Q. Did he ever know what name it was?

A. No.

Q. What other change did you make?

A. Well, I made the last verse on it, "Come on you ladies, you must take warning. Never speak hard words to your true, loving husband; He may leave you and never return."

Q. What changes did you make in the last verse?

A. It was some different. I don't know exactly what.

Q. He had a verse similar to that?

A. I substituted and fixed it up.

Q. You used your own words where you couldn't recall his words?

A. I didn't know there was another singing it, until everybody began saying it was their song. I didn't know about it.

Q. Of course, this is not your composition: you have just simply put it together like you have said?

A. Yes.

March 1, 1923, I was called to New York to make a test record.

Q. By whom were you called?

A. The General Phonograph Company.

occasional pluck on a bass string. Whitter's singing style was a bland one at best, now and then pitched in too high a key for him to keep in control; furthermore, the acoustic recording technique on his earliest sessions made him sound quite unnatural. On many numbers he either ran out of words well before the 3 minutes of recording time had elapsed or deliverately chose to play his harmonica rather than sing.

His recordings with G. B. Grayson were markedly different, but the difference was largely due to Grayson himself--a fine singer who coaxed a rich, haunting archaic sound out of his fiddle. On most of their duets, Whitter's role was confined to a few spoken comments and pedestrian, guitar back-up; but some of the pieces, such as "I Saw a Man At the Close of Day", "Don't Go Out Tonight, My Darling", and "The Red and Green Signal Lights", Whitter's guitar work is more solid and enlivened by more frequent bass runs. Numbers such as these represent the pair at their best, and the net result rates very highly in the panoply of early hillbilly music. Many of them were later picked up and recorded by other professional country musicians. There is a little evidence in any of Whitter's solo performances

having been covered up by other artists, save for Old 97 and Lonesome Road Blues. This coupling made Tennessee-Born George Reneau's debut on disc, and they almost certainly were learned from Whitter's Okeh records. Though almost all of the Grayson-Whitter duets on Victor have been reissued on LP, Whitter's solo work has not found many present fan admirers, and only one harmonica instrumental is available on LP.

My negative evaluation notwithstanding, Whitter's early solo recordings sold very well in the South, and there is no gainsaying his influence on the early development of country music. Most important was the fact that he took it upon himself to approach the recording industry in search of an opportunity to make records. His releases served as a direct stimulus on other artists to try their hand at the game--although in some cases it was because they felt they could do better than Henry did. In the final analysis, Whitter's importance rests on two accomplishments: his recording of "Wreck of the Southern Old 97," historically one of the most significant in early country music; and secondly, his bringing G. B. Grayson before the microphone--an act that bore splendid esthetic fruits.

- ¹ Archie Green, "Hillbilly Music: Source and Symbol," Jrnl. Amer. Folklore 78 (1965), 204-228. Available from JEMF as Reprint #4.
- ² Norm Cohen, "Robert W. Gordon and the Second Wreck of the 'Old 97'," ibid. 87 (1974), 12-38. JEMF Reprint #30.
- ³ This article is an expanded version of portions of a chapter, "Early Pioneers," in Stars of Country Music: Uncle Dave Macon to Johnny Rodriguez (University of Illinois Press, 1975).

DEED OF SALE

Known to all men by the presents: That I, Henry Whitter, of Fria, Virginia, for myself and as sole owner of the attached contract for the song "The Wreck of the Southern Old 97" for and in consideration of the sum of \$200.00 - Two Hundred dollars - paid to me by Fred W. Rager of New York City the receipt of which is hereby acknowledge. I hereby sell, assign, transfer and set over to Fred W. Rager all my rights, title and interest whatsoever in the sheet music rights, orchestration and book rights, and other forms of exp'ations such as music rolls, foreign rights, etc. in the said song "Wreck of the Southern Old 97". (This sale includes any royalties that might be due or are due or will ever accrue).

It is further understood and agreed that the attached contract is still in force and that I am the owner of same, and that this contract has not been sold, hypothecated or assigned to any company, person or persons.

Signed Henry Whitter
 Witness Bertha Chapman
 Date April 13-1926

THE WRECK OF THE OLD 97

by HENRY WHITTER, CHARLES W. NOELL and FRED J. LEWEY



HENRY WHITTER DISCOGRAPHY

The following discography includes not only sides featuring Whitter as soloist or with G. B. Grayson, but also those sides on which he was accompanist for another principal artist. On such sides, the initials of the principal artist or group are given in the column immediately preceding the release numbers and labels. Label names are abbreviated as follows: OK = Okeh, Ge = Gennett, Chm = Champion, Chl = Challenge, Spt = Supertone, Svt = Silvertone, Vi = Victor, BB = Bluebird, MW = Montgomery Ward, El = Electradisk; Fkwy = Folkways, Cty = County, OT = Old Timey, Pmt = Paramount, Bwy = Broadway, Her = Herwin, Zo = Zonophone (England), Su = Sunrise. Compiled with help from Eugene Earle.

ca. 1 March 1923, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

Henry Whitter, instrumentation unknown.

? Unidentified test recordings Unissued

12 December 1923, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

Henry Whitter, vocal and guitar; harmonica added -1; harmonica solo -2.

72159-A	Rain Crow Bill Blues	-2	OK	40187
72160-	The Old Time Fox Chase	-2	OK	40029
72161-	Lost Train Blues (Lost John Blues)	-2	OK	40029
72162	?			
72163-A	Weeping Willow Tree	-1	OK	40187
72164-A	Stormy Wave Blues	-1	OK	40143
72165-A	Broken Engagement Blues	-1	OK	40229
72166-A	The Kaiser and Uncle Sam		OK	40229
72167-A	Wreck On the Southern Old 97	-1	OK	40015
72168-A	Lonesome Road Blues	-1	OK	40015

ca. 21 February 1924, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

As above; harmonica & guitar only w/o vocal -3.

72339-A	Sydney Allen	-1	OK	40109
72340-A	Where Have You Been S Long?	-1	OK	40109
72341-A	New River Train	-1	OK	40143
72342-A	Chicken, You Better Go Behind the Barn	-1	OK	40077
72343	?			
72344-A	She's Coming Around the Mountain	-1	OK	40063
72345	?			
72346	?			
72347-A	Weepin' Blues	-2	OK	40120
72348-A	Hop Out Ladies & Shortenin' Bread	-2	OK	40064
72349-A	Double Headed Train	-2	OK	40120
72350-A	Little Brown Jug	-1	OK	40063
72351-A	Western Country	-3	OK	40077
72352-A	Tippy Two Step Blues	-3	OK	40064

ca. 16 July 1924, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

Whitter's Virginia Breakdowners (WVB): Henry Whitter, vocal and guitar; John Rector, banjo; James Sutphin, violin. No vocal -1; Whitter only, guitar, harmonica and vocal -2.

72679-B	'Round-Town Girl		WVB	OK	40320
72680-A	Black-Eyed Susan		WVB	OK	40320
72681-72683	Not traced.				
72684-A	Jenny Lind Polka	-1	WVB	OK	40211
72685-A	Nellie Gray	-1	WVB	OK	40211
72686-A	Drunkard's Child	-2	HW	OK	40169
72687-A	Goin' Down the Road Feelin' Bad	-2	HW	OK	40169

late October 1924, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

Henry Whitter, vocal, guitar, and harmonica; no vocal -1; no harmonica -2.

72978-B	Rabbit Race	-1	OK	40269
72979-A	Farewell To Thee	-1	OK	40269

72980	?	
72981	?	
72982-A	Watermelon Hanging On the Vine	OK 40296
72983-A	Ellen Smith	OK 40237
72984-A	Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy -1	OK 40296
72985-A	Travelling Man	OK 40237
72986-A	The Long Tongued Woman -2	OK 40352
72987-A	Dollar and the Devil	OK 40352

late April 1925, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

As above.

73312-A	Love Me While I Am Living	OK 40403
73313-A	My Darling's Black Mustache	OK 40395
73314	?	
73315-A	Clouds Gwine to Roll Away	OK 40395
73316-A	Good-Bye, Old Booze	OK 40403
73317-A	Butcher Boy	OK 40375

1 July 1925, Atlanta. General Phonograph Corp.

As above; except on sides marked RS Whitter accompanies singer Roba Stanley with guitar and harmonica.

9210-A	Story By the Moonlight	OK 45003
9211-A	Liza Jane	OK 45003
9212	?	
9213-A	Old Maid Blues	RS OK 45036
9214	?	
9215-A	Single Life	RS OK 40436

Note: Reverse of 45036 is by E. V. Stoneman; reverse of 40436 is by Stanley w/o Whitter, from a different session.

ca. 26 August 1925, Asheville, N.C. General Phonograph Corp.

Kelly Harrell, vocal, accompanied by Henry Whitter, guitar & harmonica.

9270-A	I Was Born Ten Thousand Years Ago	KH OK 40486
9271-A	Wild Bill Jones	KH OK 40486
9272-A	Peg and Awl	KH OK 40544
9273	?	
9274-A	I Was Born in Pennsylvania	KH OK 40544
9275	?	
9276-A	I'm Going Back to North Carolina	KH OK 40505
9277-A	Be At Home Tonight, My Dear Boy	KH OK 40505
9278	?	
9279-A	Wreck On the Southern Old 97	KH OK 7010
?	Blue Eyed Ella	KH OK 7010

Note: OK 7010 is a 12" record.

21 April 1926, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

Henry Whitter, vocal, guitar, and harmonica.

80003-A	Many Times With You I've Wandered	OK 45053
80004-A	Goin' Down to the Jordan to Be Baptized	OK 45053

ca. May 1926, New York City. General Phonograph Corp.

Henry Whitter, vocal, guitar, and harmonica; accompanied by Fiddler Joe, fiddle -1.

74137-A	I Wish I Was Single Again	OK 45045
74138-A	Put My Little Shoes Away	OK 45046
74139	The Old Grey Mare	Unissued
74140-A	The Heart of Old Galax	OK 45045
74141-A	Go Bury Me Beneath the Willow Tree -1	HW&FJ OK 45046
74142	Rough Road to Georgia	Unissued

ca. August 1926, Chicago. New York Recording Laboratories.

Henry Whitter, vocal, guitar, and harmonica.

2777-1	There Was an Old Tramp		Bwy 8024
2779-3	George Collins		Bwy 8024
2782-2	Snow Storm		Pmt 33183, Bwy 8023, Her 75537
2783-1	Explosion at Eccles, West Virginia		Pmt 33183, Bwy 8023, Her 75537

7 September 1926, New York City. Okeh Phonograph Corp.
 Same as May 1926 session, except no harmonica on -1.

80088-A	Hand Me Down My Walking Cane	-1	HW&FJ	OK 45061
80089-A	Show Me the Way to Go Home	-1	HW&FJ	OK 45061
80090-	A Woman's Tongue Has No End			OK 45063
80091-	The Burglar Man			OK 45063
80092-	George Collins			OK 45081
80093-	Broken Engagement			OK 45081

ca. November 1926, New York City. Okeh Phonograph Corp.
 Henry Whitter, vocal, guitar, and harmonica.

744CC	Overshoes and Leggins	Unissued
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2 August 1927, Bristol Tenn. Victor Talking Machine Co.
 Henry Whitter, harmonica solos.

39758-2	Henry Whitter's Fox Chase	Vi 20878, BB B-5259, MW M-4475, El 2139, Su S-3342, Cty 512
39759-2	Rain Crow Bill	Vi 20878, BB B-5259, MW M-4475

10 October 1927, New York City. Starr Piano Co.

G. E. Grayson, vocal and fiddle; and Henry Whitter, guitar and occasional spoken interjections.

GEX 903-A	Nobody's Darling	G&W	Ge 6304, Chm 15395
GEX 904	I'll Never Be Yours	G&W	Ge 6373, Chm 15447, Chl 393, Spt 9247, Svt 8160
GEX 905	Handsome Molly	G&W	Ge 6304, Chm 15629
GEX 906-A	Shout Lula	G&W	Ge 6373, Chm 15501
GEX 907	You Never Miss Your Mother Until She's Gone	G&W	Ge 6320, Chm 15395, Chl 394, Spt 9247, Svt 8160
GEX 908-A	Train 45	G&W	Ge 6320, Chm 15447, Chl 397
GEX 909	John Henry the Steel Driving Man	G&W	Unissued
GEX 910	He's Coming To Us Dead	G&W	Unissued

Notes: Ledger date for GEX 907A is 14 October; for 908, 910A, and 910B, 15 October.
 The following pseudonyms appeared on labels: Chm 15395: Graysen Thomas &
 Will Lotty; Chm 15447 and 15501: Norman Gayle; all Challenge: David Foley;
 Supertone: Dilliard Sanders.

Reverse of Chl 393 by George Holden (Underwood & Harris); of Chl 394 by James
 Ragan (Roy Harvey).

18 October 1927, Atlanta. Victor Talking Machine Co.

As above; except Grayson only on 40306.

40302-1	Handsome Molly	G&W	Vi 21189, OT 102
40303-1	He Is Coming To Us Dead	G&W	Vi 21139, Cty 513
40304-2	Don't Go Out Tonight, My Darling	G&W	Vi 21139, Cty 513
40305-2	Rose Conley	G&W	Vi 21625, OT 102
40306-1	Ommie Wise	GBG	Vi 21625, Fkwy FA 2951, Cty 513
40307-2	Train 45	G&W	Vi 21189, BB B-5498, OT 100

29 February 1928, New York City. Starr Piano Co.

As above.

GEX 1091	Sally Gooden	G&W	Ge 6733, Chm 15501
GEX 1092	Mine Is For Mary	G&W	Unissued
GEX 1093	She's Mine, All Mine	G&W	Ge 6656, Chm 15465
GEX 1094	Sweet Rosie O'Grady	G&W	Ge 6418
GEX 1095	I've Always Been a Rambler	G&W	Unissued
GEX 1096A	Red or Green	G&W	Ge 6418, Chm 15465, Chl 397
GEX 1097	Cluck Old Hen	G&W	Ge 6656, Chm 15629
GEX 1098	Jimmy Sutton	G&W	Ge 6436

Note: All Gennetts labeled as Henry Whitter except last two, as Whitter & Grayson;
all Champion as Norman Gayle; Challenge as David Foley.

31 July 1928, New York City. RCA Victor.

As above.

46630-2	The Red and Green Signal Lights	G&W	Vi V-40063, RCA Vi LPV 532
46631-2	Joking Henry	G&W	Vi V-40038, Cty 513
46632	There's a Man Goin' 'Round Takin' Names	G&W	Unissued
46633-2	The Nine Pound Hammer	G&W	Vi V-40105, Cty 513
46634-2	Short Life of Trouble	G&W	Vi V-40105, Cty 513
46635-2	I've Always Been a Rambler	G&W	Vi V-40324, Cty 502, Cty 513
46636-1	Where Are You Going, Alice?	G&W	Vi V-40135, Cty 513
46637-1	A Dark Road Is a Hard Road to Travel	G&W	Vi V-40063, Cty 513
46638-2	Barnyard Serenade	G&W	Vi V-40038
46639-2	Little Maggie With a Dram Glass In Her Hand	G&W	Vi V-40135, BB B-7072, OT 102

16 October 1928, Atlanta. RCA Victor.

Henry Whitter, harmonica solos.

47183-1	The Lost Girl of West Virginia	Vi V-40061
47184-2	Poor Lost Boy	Vi V-40061

30 September 1929, Memphis. RCA Victor.

G. B. Grayson, vocal and fiddle; and Henry Whitter, guitar and occasional spoken interjections.

56309-2	On the Banks of the Old Tennessee	G&W	Vi V-40235, BB B-7072, Zo 4329
56310-	Never Be As Fast As I Have Been	G&W	Vi 23565
56311-2	I Have Lost You Darling, True Love	G&W	Vi V-40268
56312-2	Tom Dooley	G&W	Vi V-40235
56313-	Going Down the Lee Highway	G&W	Vi 23565, BB B-5498, Cty 503

1 October 1929, Memphis. RCA Victor.

As above, except last two, Henry Whitter only, harmonica solos.

56322-	I Saw a Man at the Close of Day	G&W	Vi V-40324, Cty 513
56323	The Coal Creek Mines	G&W	Unissued
56324-2	What You Gonna Do With the Baby?	G&W	Vi V-40268, Cty 513
56325-2	Fox Chase No. 2 (Whitter only)		Vi V-40292, BB B-5259, El 2139, Su
56326-2	Train Blues (Whitter only)		Vi V-40292 /S-3342

28 November 1930, Memphis. RCA Victor.

Fisher Hendley and his Aristocratic Pigs: Hendley, banjo; Marshall Small, banjo; Henry Whitter, guitar. Except last two sides, Small absent.

64742	Mah Yaller Gal	FH&AP	Unissued
64743-1	A Pretty Gal's Love	FH&AP	BB B-6555
64744-1	Another Man's Wife	FH&AP	BB B-6555
64745	The Possum Hunt	FH&AP	Unissued

29 November 1930, Memphis. RCA Victor.

As above.

64748-	Shuffle, Feet, Shuffle	FH&AP	Vi 23528
64749-	Tar and Feathers	FH&AP	Vi 23528
64750	Pretty Little Girl	FH&AP	Unissued
64751	Whitter's Rabbit Hunt	FH&AP	Unissued

APPROXIMATE RELEASE DATES

OKeh				Gennett			
40015	Jan 1924	40375	Jul 1925	40544	Mar 1926	6304	Jan 1928
40109	Jun 1924	40391	Jul 1925	45003	Nov 1925	6320	Jan 1928
40237	Jan 1925	40395	Aug 1925	45045	Jun 1926	6373	Mar 1928
40269	Mar 1925	40403	Sep 1925	45046	Jul 1926	6418	May 1928
40296	Apr 1925	40436	Oct 1925	45053	Aug 1926	6436	Jun 1928
40320	May 1925	40486	Dec 1925	45061	Dec 1926	6656	Dec 1928
40352	Jun 1925	40505	Jan 1926	45063	Jan 1927	6733	Mar 1929
				45081	Feb 1927		

Champion

15395 Jan 1928
15447 Apr 1928
15465 Jun 1928
15501 Jul 1928
15629 Jan 1929

Victor

20878 Nov 1927
21139 Feb 1928
21189 Mar 1928
21625 Oct 1928
40038 Mar 1929
40061 Apr 1929
40063 May 1929
40105 Aug 1929
40135 Nov 1929
40235 Apr 1930
40268 Jul 1930
40292 Sep 1930
40434 Dec 1930
23528 Mar 1931
23565 Jul 1931

Bluebird

5259 1933
5498 1934
6555 1936
7072 1937

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Champion, RCA Victor and Blue Bird, and has been recording records for over 14 years. His "Fox Chase," "Lost Train Blues," "Old 97," and many others have been played by him over the Grand Ole Opry, WSM, Nashville, Tenn., and while he is not there they are now being played by other musicians from WSM. There is hardly ever a Saturday night but what you hear his "Fox Chase," and "Lost Train Blues" broadcast over the radio by someone.

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Fisher Hendley, Henry Whittier
Marshall Small

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in 1924.
KELLEY HARROLL, of
Okeh Co.
JIMMY RODGERS, of
in 1924.
G. B. GRAYSON, of the
RCA Victor in 1927
FISHER HENDLEY, of
of RCA Victor in 1930.

musicians that Mr.
phonograph records:
1923.
EN, both of Virginia.
In 1922, all for the
for RCA Victor.
for Gannett Co., and
MARSHALL SMALL, both
in 1930.



Kelley Harroll and Henry Whittier

"WE MADE OUR NAME IN THE DAYS OF RADIO":

A LOOK AT THE CAREER OF WILMA LEE AND STONEY COOPER

By Robert Cogswell

Various country music stars have been quoted as saying that their success in the music business was due to their "sincerity." Regardless when, and with whom, this cliché did originate, it reflects the common knowledge that the traditional country music audience has, in the face of numerous modernizations, long favored a performance attitude which transcends the media and assures the listener that the "grassroots" have not been forgotten. Among present-day performers perhaps none exemplifies this quality, and the underlying philosophy of entertainment, better than Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper. Their career spans several periods in the evolution of country music, and this experience has made its mark on both their attitudes about performance and style and the way they fit into the contemporary music industry. This article will provide a brief outline of that career and some reflections on it.¹

The conception of a traditional country music performance is, of course, relative to time. Change has been constant, not only in musical style and material, but also in such elements as stage dress, audience rapport, and means of promotion. The nature of the medium itself--be it radio, sound recording, or television--has been influential in affecting trends. Performers of successive eras have, in turn, adapted to the media in different ways. For example, the discography of commercial recordings by Wilma Lee and Stoney charts the course of their efforts in one medium which, from the standpoint of the present industry, happens to be the most dominant. It says nothing, however, about radio and personal appearances, the real bread-and-butter of their career. As Neil Rosenberg has noted in his discography of Bill Monroe, it is important to recognize the secondary nature of recordings to entertainers of this type in approaching and interpreting their discography.² Such consideration of the conflicting demands between media, particularly under going trends and industry pressures, can certainly shed light on the Wilma Lee and Stoney discography regarding the choice of some items for recording, the exclusion of others, and the paucity of recordings during specific periods. In the case of the Coopers, the discography by no means represents the entire live-performance repertoire from the

course of their career, and to those interested in traditional song it probably has numerous omissions, for which, unfortunately there is no complete account. Their live-performance orientation has been influential beyond mere material, however, for it provides the basis for the musical style and professional attitude which has typified Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper to their audience over the years. The following biographical sketch is a rough summary of their story as it was related to me.

Wilma Lee was born in Valley Head, West Virginia, on 20 February 1921, her full maiden name Wilma Leigh Leary. She was the oldest of three girls, all of whom inherited their parents' interest in music. Singing at home was usually accompanied by a pump organ, which Wilma Lee and her mother both played. When she had mastered the pump organ, Wilma's father bought her a guitar with lessons via mail from the Chicago School of Music. The family sang from Rode-heaver's and R. E. Winsett's song books, among others. Their repertoire of "plain country gospel songs" was developed by singing at home, but gradually they began to appear in public, initially only at church-related events: regular services, funerals, and singing conventions. Their only accompaniment was Wilma Lee's rhythm guitar, and their adaptation of songbook part-songs to this format gave the Leary Family a style within a gospel tradition at that point not yet recorded:

SC-I would class it like the Chuck Wagon Gang. It wasn't, you know, a copy of that, but it was a whole different sound. I would say their style, like the repeats and things like that, resembled the old Chuck Wagon Gang. They done that shaped-note type singing, and that's what her father and mother read--shaped notes.

WLC-They couldn't read the regular--they had to be shaped notes.

SC-So their repeats were their strongest. This is, I think, what really sold their quintet. There was five of them. Their mother done the high part, and her dad, the real low. And he was a very, very low singer--had just a real

bass voice, you know, even when he spoke fast--they had fast-moving gospel spirituals.

WLC--And we did slow ones, too--just a mixture.

Among the Leary Family's most prominent numbers were "He Will Set Your Fields On Fire"; "Blessed Jesus, Hold My Hand"; "Seeking The Lost"; "Give Me The Roses While I Live"; "Farther Along"; "I'll Never Be Lonesome in Heaven"; and "Amazing Grace." They used primarily their own arrangements for songs, and were uninfluenced by recorded music. As Stoney explains it:

It was its own original, because there was a family that had things sort of put together as it come natural to them. I'd say they copied no one, because there really wasn't anybody out on record then but the Carter Family that you could copy, and they didn't do that type of song, to an extent. So, theirs was their own creation of singing. It's too bad we can't get a hold of it.

The family, of course, originally did not have any professional aspirations, but their success led them into continued public appearances as the girls grew older. Jacob Leary was straightforward in overseeing the family group and was reluctant to push them into becoming full-time professionals. Their professionalism came gradually, and, as Stoney puts it, "they fell into things, they really didn't know anything about show business."

In 1938, however, first place in a local contest led the Leary Family to participate in the National Folk Festival and to a good deal of recognition. As Wilma Lee remembers it:

Yes, they had this contest in the state of West Virginia; they had one in each state. And Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt--Franklin Delano Roosevelt's wife--was sponsoring what they called a "National Folk Festival" in Washington, D.C., which lasted about a week. And they were gonna have a group from each state to represent the state. And all over the state they held the contests, and my family won in our little section where we grew up. And then after that, all the winners of the different contests came together. And my family won, so we went to Washington in 1938 representing the state of West Virginia. They had shows, programs, lined up for each day, you know, and we sang at different places in Washington. We'd sing once a day. It went on a week. I can't remember now--because we weren't too old, and that's the furthest we'd ever been away from home, and all the excitement

and everything--can't remember how long the shows were. But I know they took us one afternoon to the Library of Congress and recorded my family singing these old hymns the whole afternoon.³

As the Learys began to play a wider range of public appearances, the girls added some secular folksongs to the repertory, but Mr. and Mrs. Leary sang only on gospel numbers. Also, Wilma Lee's maternal uncle began to play fiddle with the group. When he returned to schoolteaching and stopped appearing with the family, his shoes were to be filled by young "Fiddlin' Dale" Cooper from nearby Harmon, West Virginia.

Stoney's christened name is Dale Troy Cooper, and he was born in Harmon on 16 October 1918, into a family of schoolteachers. At about twelve or thirteen he began to play guitar and some "clawhammer" style banjo, but fiddle music was what he really loved. As he comments on his background:

Well, of course, mine is completely different from hers--not so much probably the background as far as gospel if you're speaking of what was in my home. My folks were very religious. The church was the main thing; that's where we were brought up. However, being young, I turned out to be a fiddler; I was always crazy about a fiddle. My older brother before me was a fairly good country fiddler, and he would play for the square dances. And I would see this, and it seemed like it brought people so much joy, you know. They just got an awful lot of joy out of just hearing him play that fiddle, oftentimes just by himself--no accompaniment, you know. Really, I couldn't hear that much that he played so good. But Arthur Smith was on the radio here at the Grand Ole Opry, and this was the one that I heard coming through, you see. And I thought, "Boy, if I could ever learn to play the fiddle like that..." I don't play anything like him at all. But he was the one. Boy, if I didn't hear Arthur Smith, I just didn't care for the Grand Ole Opry that Saturday night--I had to wait till the next one.

Dale pursued the fiddle, and in 1937, when he graduated from high school, he was offered a job with Rusty Hiser and his Green Valley Boys. Hiser was assembling a band to play at WMMN in Fairmont, West Virginia, and the other musicians he gathered all had previous professional experience. Thus Stoney learned a lot in his first full-time fiddling job, playing mostly background fiddle and taking a vocal part on hymns. It was on this early morning show that the Learys first heard Dale.

Rusty Hiser decided to move from WMMN to a station in Lynchburg, Virginia, a shift which proved to be the group's downfall. After several months it was apparent that ends would not meet, and the group disbanded. At this time the band consisted of Hiser on guitar, a little girl singer, a tenor banjo, a bass, Stoney, and another fiddler, a man named "Smitty" from Franklin, West Virginia, who knew some of the Arthur Smith technique which Stoney admired. In Lynchburg, Stoney also met a fiddler for another group on the station, Burk Barber (who later played for Molly O'Day and Lynn Davis). Stoney remembers Burk trying to teach him to play with a looser wrist by practicing while seated in a ladderback chair with his right elbow hooked around its right rear upright. Stoney came back to work the farm with his father and twin brother. His father died the next summer (1938), so Stoney remained around home where he was needed. He was somewhat disillusioned with the entertainment business and satisfied to wait before trying again:

You know, it was pretty rough sledding out there; it wasn't at all like I thought it was going to be. I could see our names up in lights, and it wasn't that at all. It was really a let-down, you know. But you don't start at the top and work down; you start at the bottom and work up. But, each young man or lady, I would say, no matter how successful they've been, I don't think could ever be bigger than what your imagination could capture for you.

The Learys, at that same time, were interested in getting a new fiddler, and one in particular. As Wilma Lee remembers, their first attempt to contact him was fruitless:

We worked his hometown. We worked, I believe it was the high school at Harmon, West Virginia. So, my dad and mother thought he'd be there that night, my dad could talk to him, you know, try to offer him a job. And we got there and kept watching, we didn't see nobody looked like they'd be "Fiddlin' Dale." So we started asking, and they said, "No, he's not here tonight." That was after the show. He didn't come. They said, "I guess he's up on one of them mountains fox-hunting somewhere."

Shortly thereafter, Stoney received a penny postcard from Jacob C. Leary asking him to come to Seneca Caverns the next Sunday, where the Leary Family was making a public appearance, and discuss the possibility of playing with them. At first, he was not particularly impressed with the offer, but decided to go anyway:

I didn't think too much about it. I thought, "Well, it's somewhere to go Sunday," and I said something to my

brother about it. "Well," he said, "Let's." I don't think he wanted me to take the job, but he said, "Well, let's go see the show." Okay, we decided to go. Got over there, and up on the stage there was a couple of pretty girls, you know. And one of them was only about 12. But very, very pretty girls, and their mother and father. It looked a little more interesting than the postcard had looked, you know. So, when they come off, they offered us to go through the caverns free--and back there a dollar was a dollar, if you got anything free you gracefully accepted it and was very thankful, which was a good lesson; right today if we get anything free we're grateful. Went through the caverns, and when I got out Mr. Leary said, "I'll offer you ten dollars a week, room and grub." That's the way he put it--"room and grub." He was a real pioneer type.

Perhaps somewhat influenced by the Leary girls, Stoney took the job, and his romance with Wilma Lee, and their musical career together, began to take shape by late in 1938.

Stoney added a new dimension to the Leary Family band. In addition to the standard gospel numbers and the girls' trios, Wilma Lee and Stoney's duets were strictly non-gospel material. Stoney feels that because they "were a young couple and looked good together," the audiences especially enjoyed their numbers, and he gives the people of the Shenandoah Valley area a good deal of credit for their courtship and marriage. Because the duet was popular and consistently well-received throughout the territory in which the Learys appeared, Wilma Lee and Stoney's segment of the act expanded. Their repertory included a range of "heart songs, love ballads, and novelty songs," and two numbers remembered as being particularly popular were "Salty Dog" (learned off a jukebox; probably from the Morris Brothers' version) and "Paper of Pins."

Of the girls' trios, "Sparkling Blue Eyes" was a favorite. Wilma Lee's sister Gerry became the M. C. for the group, and she did the straight lines in comedy sketches with Mr. Leary, who sometimes appeared in costume. Although the routines were not polished, because of Jacob Leary's local popularity they were successful. The territory which they worked continued to be centered around Valley Head. In 1939 the Leary Family received and turned down two opportunities to reach larger audiences and promote their career; Roy Acuff encouraged them to appear on the Grand Ole Opry and "Black Draught" extended a sizeable offer for the Learys to shift locales to

Chattanooga and represent their product. Stoney remembers his disappointment in Mr. Leary's conservative management of the band and reluctance to take the family away from West Virginia in pursuit of a professional career. He never questioned his judgment at the time, however, for the band maintained their success with the existing audience.

Wilma Lee and Stoney were married in 1941. In the fall of 1941 the Leary Family began to appear on WWVA in Wheeling (at that time still a 5,000 watt station). Here they continued the same kind of act and increased contacts with show business people. In March 1942, Wilma Lee and Stoney's daughter Carol Lee was born, and the couple stopped performing entirely in order to maintain their new family. Stoney worked long hours for six months at the Vaughn Beverage Company, delivering bottled soft drinks in Wheeling. Once the baby got older, Wilma Lee grew tired of being a housewife. They decided to go back to performing, not as part of the Leary Family, but to look for a job in a radio station where they wouldn't have to make personal appearances to make ends meet.

Through an announcer friend in Wheeling who had contacts in the Midwest, Wilma Lee and Stoney got in touch with the program director for KMMJ in Grand Island, Nebraska. Their acetate audition recording pleased the station, and they got the job. In the fall of 1942 they moved to Nebraska, where they worked until the next summer. The pay was not high, but acceptable, and "you were indoors, and got to pick and sing, do what you wanted to do." They worked without a band and did about six programs a day. Also appearing on KMMJ were Ben and Jesse Mae Norman, another duet, and Stoney played fiddle on their programs as well. Wilma typed for the radio station to make extra money between programs. Meanwhile, as Stoney remembers, he got in a little hot water learning to play pool:

Now the pool hall was right down below.
WLC--You had to stay at the radio station all day. You didn't know when you were going on.

SC--It was either stay up there and type--which I couldn't do, Wilma could--and busy yourself at that, or go across the street and drink coffee till your next program, or go downstairs in the pool hall... Ben Norman was fine, oh, he was good at pool. And I paid for more games for that guy, till I learned how to play pool. You know, it was 'losers pay.' One day Wilma came down after we'd stayed so long, it was about ten minutes before time to be back on that program, or one had been thrown in early. All I had accredited, they put it up on a blackboard, you know. This guy never

seemed to get beat out of anybody paying his debts, 'cause his name was always on the blackboard. "Stoney Cooper--Fourteen dollars and something." Wilma come down and she saw that--oh, brother, I got a sermon... But after awhile I got to where Ben was paying some of the bills, too.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Leary Family had moved to a small station in Indianapolis, and Peggy (the middle of the girls) had married an accordionist named Bob Howell, who also performed with the family. KMMJ brought the Leary Family to Grand Island, and for several months the entire family, with the two sons-in-law, was together again. Bob wrote comedy sketches, and he and Stoney began to do "Lum and Abner" type radio routines, complete with sound effects. WIBC in Indianapolis expressed interest in hiring the entire group. Mr. Wall, the station manager had known Stoney previously in Fairmont. Stoney had learned to play dobro (actually just a flat-top guitar with raised strings) in order to accompany Wilma Lee on several Roy Acuff numbers--"Low And Lonely," "Wreck On The Highway," "Cowards Over Pearl Harbor," and "Don't Make Me Go To Bed And I'll Be Good." The last two were among the most requested in the WIBC "Mail Bag" not too long after the Leary aggregation arrived in Indianapolis in the summer of 1943. Stoney had acquired a National steel dobro by then, and the duo was given their own program. The popularity of the Acuff material and style was so strong that it influenced the basic direction of Wilma Lee and Stoney's sound--it utilized Wilma Lee's strength as a "heavy" vocal solo and allowed Stoney to play instrumental backup and sing vocal harmony.

Indianapolis was just a stay of several months, however. At that time Bob Atcher and Bonnie Blue-Eyes were on WJJD in Chicago with the "Breakfast-time" and "Suppertime Frolic." Atcher was called for military service, and the duo would have to be replaced. Before his departure, Atcher and several others were flying over the Indianapolis area in an airplane, covering the story of a large Indiana flood for WJJD news. While in the area they heard Wilma Lee and Stoney's program over WIBC, and Atcher returned to Chicago with the recommendation that WJJD seek and audition from the Coopers. This they did, and Wilma Lee and Stoney were more than glad to fill the request, for WJJD was a 20,000 watt station and a considerable step up. The audition recording, which featured "Cowards Over Pearl Harbor," was quite a success. They got the job and Wilma Lee was welcomed in Chicago as "the she-Roy Acuff." The duo arrived there in the latter months of 1943, and were to stay in Chicago for a little less than a year.

At WJJD Wilma Lee and Stoney had the early morning program from 4 to 7 A.M., and therefore, they were not doing live appearances at night:

SC-You didn't need to have personal appearances, you see; and they didn't want you to, because they wanted you back there.

WLC-Well, Stoney and I, we were on from 4 o'clock in the morning till 7--three hours.

SC-You couldn't chance going out and not getting back, 'cause there was a three hour program. And what were they gonna do, play records? Unheard of!

Sharing their program was Red Belcher and his partner Paul Groves. It was bigtime radio and they enjoyed working it, but tensions between the musicians' union and the Atlas Brothers, the station owners, erupted over the issue of using recorded music, and a strike ensued which eventually forced the Coopers to leave Chicago. The union demanded that the station "double their talent" to insure that there would be no need for recorded music. The station did not comply, and the strike began. For three months Wilma Lee and Stoney went daily to the station and awaited a settlement. Stoney was forced to get a job in a Gary, Indiana, defense plant. Finally all musicians were released by the station, which decided to program on recorded music. The Coopers had no choice but to return to West Virginia.

They quickly picked up a spot at Fairmont on WMMN's "Sagebrush Roundup" and fell back on their sure popularity on this territory. At the time, Stoney recalls, they had not yet developed their own savvy about the music business, and it took them a while to realize the duet's potential and become inclined to striking out with their own show. Wilma Lee's songs were much-requested--so quickly, in fact, that it became obvious that she was being confused with another strong-voiced female singer, Molly O'Day, who sang similar numbers and was heard by some of the same audience which had listened to Wilma Lee from WJJD:

SC-So we didn't know it, and yet we should have been aware of it. But this is how things can happen, you know, when you're young. This business like, I see people that come up and get their one record overnight, then they feel they know all there is to know about it. Not true, you see more of 'em go down and they wonder what happened to 'em. It's simply because they didn't know what direction to go in. Well, there we didn't realize that we'd been on WJJD, a 20,000 watt station, that had covered all that area. And we couldn't understand why they was writin' in and wantin' us out at personal appearances. And we'd only been there a few weeks. We were going out with the "Sagebrush Roundup," and you'd have to take the split along with everybody. And you could see the people running out to certain ones, you know. And I hope it doesn't sound like bragging, I don't ever

want to feel that way, but they'd run right to us and we never did understand it. We didn't have any records; we never understood it. So finally it dawned on us. People would say, "Do that 'Hills Of Roane County.'" Well, I know where that started--WJJD. Molly O'Day and Wilma, we didn't know it at that time, but they were both singing that song. And I'm sure she didn't hear us, or I'm reasonably sure. And I know we didn't hear her; she was in Louisville. And so they'd write in to WJJD and say, "Please have Molly O'Day sing 'Hills Of Roane County'."

RC-They thought she was Molly O'Day?

SC-Yes. And then it went on for a few weeks that, from Louisville would come mail to Wilma Lee because it would have Stoney Cooper attached to it. Then, they'd know, "for Wilma Lee"--"Well, that's not here, they've mistook Molly for that." So the two were like that. So then it dawned on me, after they started requesting some of those songs that couldn't have possibly gotten that hot in the short time we'd been at WMMN. Wilma came to me one day and said, "You know what? I think we could take our own band out and do just as well." Well, it kind of scared me, you know, my own band. This was in '44.

The idea sank in, however, and soon they were putting together a band of their own to work personal appearances by themselves while remaining on WMMN. Floyd Kirkpatrick, an electric steel guitar player they had known in Chicago, was contacted, and he agreed to come to West Virginia. Also Ab Cole, a bass player who was to remain with Wilma Lee and Stoney for the next several years, joined the act:

SC-He was the best deal we ever made. "Cause he was a good voice in there, third part--high or low, it didn't make any difference. And a good bass player. He had them hands that looked like he'd come out of the lumber mills. When he hit them strings, I mean he could pop 'em.

A few adjustments were made to accommodate the new format of a complete band, for Wilma Lee and Stoney were used to working "forty-five minutes to an hour" straight with only a duet. After a few shows they further expanded, and hired another musician, "Yodeling Joe" Lambert, to add more diversity to the show:

SC-Boy, he could yodel. He played guitar. It didn't add to the band any, but it was another feature. See, our shows were so big there we didn't worry about getting 'em in the first show, just the

second one. So I guess we got a little top-heavy, and we thought that we should give the people more than what we were--four people. Added Joe and he was popular. They really liked him; he could tear the house down. Of course, I've always been the kind that, just so the people just so they got what they come to see.

By late 1945 the territory had been worked out for them, and Wilma Lee and Stoney decided it was time to move on.

About Christmas, 1945, the Coopers traveled westward to find a new radio job. Accompanying them in the move were Ab Cole and "Yodeling Joe." Although they'd written ahead, they found that the "Midday Merry-Go-Round" in Knoxville (which had since hired Molly O'Day) and station WLAC in Nashville did not look like good prospects. Ray Duke, a singer they'd worked with in Chicago, had sent word that he'd been quite successful at KLCN in Blytheville. There the station owner, Mr. Sudberry, liked their act and took them on--the policy here being no pay, with air time providing advertisement for personal appearances.

While in Blytheville, the Coopers' radio program was heard by a young musician in Grenada, Mississippi, who was later to become an important part of their band. The grandson of Luther "Chink" Clark, a well-known fiddler in the area, Bill Carver learned to play the steel guitar while working in the PX at Camp Biscayne, Mississippi, during the war. He also had experimented with other instruments, and, still in his teens with a young wife and baby, Bill arrived in Blytheville one day to audition for Wilma Lee and Stoney. They were especially impressed with his Bill Monroe style mandolin playing as well as his versatility on steel and other instruments, and he was hired on the spot. The mandolin added to their gospel numbers, and the steel had been missing since they had left West Virginia. Also Johnny Johnson, on rhythm guitar, joined the band for a time here. By March, 1947, this territory was worked out, and another move was made.⁴

This time Wilma Lee and Stoney relocated in Asheville, North Carolina, on WWNC, where response was, at first, very good. But within three months it became apparent that the territory there was very limited:

WLC--They gave us a good deal. The reason we only stayed there three months--the station was owned by the newspaper. They said they'd give us free publicity, and they gave us a salary, so much. Well, it sounded like a real good deal. We got in there and Stoney said, "Now we'll work a month or six weeks, so people'll know who we are, before we book anything."

So we went along there, what, about a month?

SC--No, it was about three weeks at the most, and in comes a postcard.

WLC--Wants us at....

SC--Fairview, which was about fifteen miles out of Asheville. And I debated on that, I thought, "Well?" It was the principal, and I wrote him back and told him, "Alright, we had not intended to play dates until such-and-such a time, but since his town was very close, we would." Well, we went out there, and that auditorium seated eight hundred-something people, and we had nine hundred-something in there.

WLC--In about three weeks work on the radio station--that's all the time that they'd heard us.

SC--I thought, "Good heavens, I believe we've hit paydirt, this definitely was a good move." You know, you're always leery. So another one came in over the opposite way, from Black Mountain. Went up there and had something less than eight hundred in there. And I said, "We've hit, we've really hit a strong place for us." You know, you go to certain audiences and just happen to be what they want to see. So I was thrilled to death.... So then the station was very happy about it, because it was drawing that well; the sponsors came on like made. Then we were doing a date over in Marion, North Carolina. It's just over the mountain, about forty miles. Well, the station, as Wilma told you the newspaper owned the radio station, so the newspaper was giving us half-page ads free, and plugs over the station like you've never heard. And they were gonna remote control, which was rare then, from Marion back to the radio station. So we set up the afternoon to do it, and you know, there wasn't hardly anybody out there. And we'd scheduled to do the broadcast in the afternoon, you know. Oh, a couple of hundred people were out there. I thought, "Well, maybe they'll be here tonight." I'll declare, I bet we didn't have four hundred people there all day long. Was it ever a disappointment. Went back to them and they didn't understand it. And I certainly couldn't understand it from the other deals we'd played. Well, my next date was Boone, North Carolina.

WLC--Across another mountain.

SC--Went over there to play the courthouse--we used to play a lot of courthouses. So we got there, and I think eight or nine people showed up.

WLC--Not even enough to play to. Then we started asking questions, you know, to

the ones that was there.

SC- And they said, "Where are you from?"

WLC- They couldn't get the station.

SC- Well, that told me pretty much what I was wanting to know.

WLC- The thing was, it set there in a valley surrounded by mountains, and as long as you played these little towns in the valley, where you packed 'em in. . . But if you went over a mountain they couldn't get the station. See, you had no territory to work. So that's why, then, we decided to leave there.

While at WWNC, however, Wilma Lee and Stoney did get their first chance to make commercial recordings. Jim "Hobart" Stanton of Johnson City, Tennessee, who had recently started his own label, Rich-T-Tone, was servicing jukeboxes in the Asheville area when he first heard Wilma Lee and Stoney singing faintly over the radio. He followed the sound to the building adjacent to the one with the jukebox and inquired about the duet. Stanton proceeded to the WWNC studio and proposed an offer to Stoney. Rich-R-Tone was a small label and not yet on solid footing, but Stoney was, at that time, open to any chances to record. Their first session was at night at the WWNC studio, and when they left Asheville shortly thereafter, Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper were under contract, although no records had yet been released.⁵

They considered going back to Fairmont first, but after a successful interview with Mr. Ryan at WWVA in Wheeling (by now a 50,000 watt station), they were hired on 26 July 1947. The record contract, Stoney remembers, was impressive and helped them get the job. At WWVA the entertainers were paid according to the percentage of the station's mail response addressed to them, which was calculated in units referred to as "P. I. 's." Among products sold over the air were nylon hose, insurance, monuments, cosmetics, carving knives, baby chicks, and seasonal products such as seeds. By the late fall of 1947, in spite of a defective initial audition recording, the Coopers were accepted for sponsorship by Carter's pills. Their taped show for Carter's was to appear on twenty 50,000 watt stations three mornings a week for a year and was the most extensively broadcast show Wilma Lee and Stoney have ever had. Stoney takes pride in recalling that Mr. Carter himself was an old-time fiddle fan and entertained sophisticated friends with his personal recordings of the Coopers.

The first two Rich-R-Tone releases appeared by early in 1948. Their third release was to include "Tramp On The Street." Unfortunately for them, Molly O'Day's Columbia recording of the same song came out before theirs, which was then hastily released in an effort not to lose too many sales. After the Rich-R-Tone discs had

been on the market for a brief period, with good response in sales over the air and at personal appearances, complaints of bad packaging and breakage on mail orders (which were being shipped from outside Wheeling) grew more frequent. Finally, while response was still eight to nine hundred orders a day, the record offer was taken off the air.

With records, then, Wilma Lee and Stoney found they had even more to learn about the ins and outs of show business. One big lesson had to do with the way they got new songs and the complications which arose in recording new material. Thus far in their career, they attained songs in a traditional manner. Wilma Lee's ability with shorthand was a real benefit, and it "hardly ever cost more than a dime" to get the words to a song off a jukebox. Bill Carver recalls the source of most of the Coopers' songs at that time:

I know that Wilma Lee and Stoney, from doing radio shows, when they came to Blytheville they had a satchel, maybe two, of songs that was old as the hills. And their material was all this old material that they'd gathered over a period of years. Back, I guess, when her mother and father sang--the Leary Family sang together. Probably a lot of the sacred, country-gospel songs came out of that. There wasn't, at that time, wasn't a thing of doing each other's songs, couldn't have been. Each one had to reach back and grab an old type song. Unless, of course, at that time people like Mel Foree were traveling up and down the land representing Acuff and Rose songs, and sometimes he would come by and bring a song that somebody had done. And he'd want different groups to do it, you know, to get it hotter in the country. But it took awhile for that to work, and it was a slow process compared to what we've got now.

With their recording of Bill Monroe's "Wicked Path of Sin," the Coopers encountered some problems which they had not anticipated:

SC- Yeh, that brings us back again, you know, Wilma could take off things in shorthand. She hasn't practiced in a long time, but she used to could get it right, well, she got it at least the second time that Bill done it. Then was when Bill would write his songs and go ahead and do it, but what we didn't know was that there was an ethic here in Nashville that they didn't do each other's songs and things like that.

RC- Well, you heard it on a live performance, then?

SC-Yeh, we heard him on the Grand Ole Opry on Saturday night sing it.

WLC-Well, when we'd hear something we'd like, we'd stop the car if we were traveling. I'd just write the words down, and he'd get the tune. So that's how we got that. He did it one Saturday night we were traveling, and we stopped the car and got the words off. And we liked the song, so we started doing it. When we recorded, we just recorded that one, so....

SC-We love Bill Monroe, you know.

WLC-So we found out later that he went up through--I don't know if he had it in the can, you know, had it recorded but not released, or not--but anyway, he went up through Virginia and there was the "Wicked Path of Sin" all over the jukeboxes--ours. His song he had written and....

RC-And he didn't even have it out?

WLC-And he didn't even have it out yet.

SC-We thought he had.

WLC-We didn't really know he'd written the song. Because, you know, they'd sing songs they didn't write. Just something we'd get out.

SC-At any rate, we were ignorant of the whole thing. And then I found out he did write it, and I thought Bill would be happy, you know, about it. And I was there at the Opry one Saturday night, and I said, "Bill, sure do like that "Wicked Path of Sin." I said, "You know, we recorded it." "Yeah, I know," he said, "Don't it seem to you a little when you sing other people's songs, after awhile you sort of get yourself patterned like them?" That really hurt me, you know. Of course we're the dearest of friends now. But it really hurt me because I held him so high.

RC-He didn't get that first crack at it.

SC-That was it. And I guess he thought it was unethical--and perhaps so. But of course....

WLC-Back then it was the radio.

RC-You had a different way of getting songs back then, didn't you?

WLC-That's right, and it was a song we liked. And when we recorded, it was a song we liked, that one, so we recorded it.⁶

Despite various complications, the Rich-T-Tone releases proved the saleability of the Cooper's music. Jim Stanton remembers their "Tramp On The Street" and the Stanley Brothers' "Little Glass Of Wine" as the biggest sellers in the Rich-R-Tone 400 series. He also recalled an incident which effected the present name of Wilma Lee and Stoney's band. The first Rich-R-Tone releases identified their group as "Stoney

Cooper and the Clinch Mountain Boys." This band name, of course, was also used by the Stanley Brothers, and at Carter Stanley's insistence, Stanton convinced Stoney to alter the name of their group. "The Clinch Mountain Clan" provided a suitable change.

Fred Rose of Acuff-Rose had noted the success of Wilma Lee and Stoney's recordings. On a trip to Nashville with Gene Johnson, their manager at WWVA, Stoney was approached by Rose about signing with Columbia. By the time Stoney had returned to Wheeling, Rose had consulted with Art Satheray, and a contract was formally offered to them. The major label was attractive, of course, and they accepted. At the time of the agreement, however, the musician's union had suspended all recording in an effort to combat the replacement of live radio entertainment with recorded music, a last effort in the musicians' effort to secure a separation between the two media. The Coopers could do no recording in the meantime. The union's position finally weakened, and their first Columbia session was scheduled for 8 April 1949, to be held in the Tulane Hotel in Nashville.

While Wilma Lee and Stoney were in Wheeling there were several changes among their band members. Bill Carver remembers coming to Wheeling with the Coopers and being the first dobro-player on the WWVA Jamboree. He remained with them until 1951, then worked as a stage musician at WWVA for two years before moving to Indianapolis, where he later returned to music with a gospel group and eventually rejoined the Clinch Mountain Clan on the Grand Ole Opry. Replacing Carver in 1951 was Buck Graves, who formerly played with Esco Hankins and others. Graves later accompanied the Coopers in their move to Nashville and established himself in Flatt and Scruggs' band. In the very early fifties the Coopers hired their first banjo player, a North Carolina musician named Chuck Henderson, who had been in Wheeling previously. In 1953 or 1954 John Clark began to play banjo with them. In their first few years at Wheeling, a young fiddler named Tex Logan, taking leave from his studies at M. I. T., joined the Clinch Mountain Clan for a period of roughly a year, after which he returned to his education at Stoney's encouragement. The bass player-comedian role within the group changed hands several times. After Ab Cole was Smiley Sutter ("Crazy Elmer"), "Dapper Dan," and Woody Woodham, who made the move to Nashville. After the Coopers had been in Wheeling for a time, Jimmy Crawford began to play steel guitar with them and also accompanied them to the Opry. This roster is certainly not complete, for other musicians were used at various times, both session musicians and side-men on the WWVA Jamboree.

Wilma Lee and Stoney firmly established themselves at WWVA, and it was from this stage

that they were introduced to most of their present-day audience.⁷ The WWVA listening area was immense, extending well into Canada, and frequent personal appearances gave them the kind of audience rapport that they maintain today. They taped a fifteen minute program, aired daily on WWVA at 11:15 P.M., and appeared weekly on the Jamboree. Much of the other time was spent traveling to and from dates. The artists at WWVA paid the station five per cent of all personal appearance profits, and for the ten years the Coopers were there, they were the top name on the station's "artist service" list. A genuine interest in meeting and pleasing their audience made Wilma Lee and Stoney's performances fast-moving and balanced, with "something for everybody." Comedy sketches sometimes extended, were a part of the show, and Bill Carver remembers a skit entitled "The Ghost Walks at Midnight," which they performed in earlier years to the delight of children at schoolhouse dates, using portable blue lights to create an eerie effect. In addition to a rigorous public appearance schedule, the Coopers owned their own record shop in Wheeling.

Following their last contract period with Columbia, the Coopers were interested in becoming associated with a new label. Columbia was not an exclusively country label, and the Columbia country artists receiving the most promotion at the time had been signed since the Coopers (under Don Law, who succeeded Art Satheray). Wesley Rose took an interest in Wilma Lee and Stoney because they had been among his father's "talent," and in 1955 he offered them a contract with Hickory. It was a new, minor label at the time, but they were assured of a better exposure to the country market and felt it was a step in the direction towards Nashville. With the first Hickory session they began to use electric guitar in the group, played by Chet Atkins, who also supervised the early Hickory sessions.

After ten years at WWVA, Wilma Lee and Stoney moved to Nashville and joined the WSM Grand Ole Opry on 1 February 1957. In terms of record sales, their most successful years came shortly thereafter. In 1959 two of their releases, "Big Midnight Special" and "Come Walk With Me," were among the top ten country-western hits. In 1960 they had one song in this category, "There's A Big Wheel." Wilma Lee and Stoney's years with Hickory were their most prolific for recording, with a heavier emphasis upon gospel material than before. On 28 October 1965, they signed with Decca, and although under contract with Decca for four years, Wilma Lee and Stoney had only five recording sessions during this period.

Among the musicians making up the Clinch

Mountain Clan at live appearances during the sixties were Joe Edwards (electric guitar), L.E. White (guitar and third vocal part), Victor Jordan (banjo), and Lou Stringer (bass). In 1967 Bill Carver returned to Nashville with the Swanee River Boys gospel quartet, and within three years he was again appearing with Wilma Lee and Stoney. With Carver the dobro sound, which had been absent during most of the Hickory and Decca periods, returned to the band. More recently banjo player Mike Lattimore has joined the group. Appearing frequently with her parents since they joined the Opry and adding a strong vocal part has been Carol Lee Cooper, who for a time was married to Rev. Jimmie Rodgers Snow, evangelist-son of Opry star Hank Snow. She currently manages her own vocal backup group, the Carol Lee Singers, doing session work in Nashville. Except for periods of Stoney's ill-health during the sixties, Wilma Lee and Stoney have maintained their rigorous live appearance schedule since coming to Nashville, traveling up to 100,000 miles a year.

On the Opry the Coopers have made their "mountain" sound a fixture among the long-established performers, those who preserve the sense of country music tradition from that stage. They have been closely associated with the Acuff "school" for a number of reasons--because of specific borrowings from the Acuff style and repertory, and, more importantly, from the performance milieu in which all entertainers of this period got their start. Wilma Lee's vocal style, which has been the real backbone of their sound, is an excellent case in point. Her singing is characterized by a driving, open-mouthed delivery, phrasing which emphasizes clear pronunciation, and a tendency to sustain notes rather than embellish them. Much of this straightforward style is shared not only with Roy Acuff, but also with "old country church singing." As Wilma Lee evaluates the style herself, it is related to both the type of song which she sings and the performance situation:

I like story songs. And I'm just a plain ole country singer. I just sing like I learned, and I never had no voice training or nothing like that. I just do what I can do. And I always thought that it was important to say your words where people could understand. Especially if you're singing a story song--you're going with the story of that song. That's what people's gotta hear to like it. And if they don't understand the words, then they don't get the story. So I always tried to speak my words plainly, that they would know what I was singing.

Wilma Lee's philosophy is a practical one for an entertainer of her era performing live on radio or at personal appearances. Her exceptional ability to project in singing fulfills a concern for full communication with her audience. As Bill Carver implies in describing Wilma Lee's success at this

attempt, a singer in a live situation cannot afford to depend solely upon a strong microphone to convey her song:

When you've got the right P. A. set, and it can be understood and heard clear, I've never seen her fail to encore continuously on the songs that she does--no matter how long she does them or how often she does them.

Wilma Lee's inclination towards a story song can be seen in both her gospel and secular material; and because her repertory emphasizes both kinds of songs, her image has not been suited to singing much of the material which has characterized more recent female vocalists. Despite the pressure of the trend towards "cheating" songs and a few recordings which were somewhat out of her image, Wilma Lee, as Bill Carver explains, has relied on the traditional story song topics and point of view.

When you think of Kitty Wells and people on down after this, they did a different kind of song. It had some similarity, a country sound, but they sang about love affairs and slipping around on a back street. Now Wilma Lee has stayed with the story type song and has never sung it personal, where it personally involved her, that she could possibly be one of the ones that was slipping around on a "Back Street Affair"--I think that was one of Kitty's big numbers... So she's stayed with the story type song, and therefore possibly it has hindered her from being as popular as some of the girl singers that have had big hit records. Because naturally we know that anything that exploits a divorce, or this, that, and the other, naturally sells, you know; where the other type song, there's a different class of people that listens to that, mainly. Although others do buy it. She sells, Stoney and her sell, I think, to a more settled type of people, whether it be middle-aged, whether it be younger type people or the older.

Besides vocal parts and instrumental breaks, Stoney's most important role within the band has been as front man and decision-maker, and as such he is constantly sensitive to the audience while on stage:

RC-Do you have any kind of format or order that you present the songs in? How has that changed over time, or has it?

SC-Well, yes, it's changed over time, because you learn a little more as you go along. And your audience teaches

you the best, if you'll just watch 'em. We like to start fast. We're that type of act, you know. There's some that could start with a ballad. We're not the type singers that have, you know, just a beautiful listening voice to listen to. We've got to excite the audience. And this is the way, I think. You have to go with your strongest points. We open with the "Midnight Special." It's rolling, you see. Well, then, the next, we may drop to a slower song for the next one; but then we're right back up again with the next one, which is normally my fiddle tune.

Although there is a standard program in mind, Stoney may alter it according to the audience response. Here Bill Carver describes his ability to keep control of the show and the audience's interest:

Stoney is good at gauging an audience--by that I mean feeling an audience out. Starting out with a certain type of a song that they don't seem to be responding to, and he'll stay with it; whether it be instrumental, or whether it be the fast into song or the slow song. So he can just kind of gauge that. If the audience doesn't begin to respond immediately, then he'll change the routine. If it seems good to begin with, then we do have a routine that we go through with.

RC-Do you think that many of the modern country acts are able to do that?

BC-No, I don't, because they've never learned it. And in the second place, 'course I'm not calling any names so it doesn't matter, but a great majority of them don't even know that. They don't know to feel of an audience and they really couldn't care less. Because they've had a couple of hit records and since they're new in the business, they walk out and do a couple of hit records and think that's all that's necessary. Years ago when we went out, you had to give the people a show. You'd have to go out, one act, and do an hour and a half. And you had to entertain people; if you didn't, they'd get up and walk out. So we would do songs, we'd do trios, we'd do solos, we'd do duets, we'd have comedy, we had instrumentals; we loved to touch everybody and do the type songs that would probably hit everybody, from a lively song to a good ballad, a good hymn, a good solid trio number, you know, to try to reach everybody.

Success at personal appearances is insured by being flexible enough to appear continually to the

audience. Radio involves a remote audience with less direct feedback, but because a product is being represented, the concern for a broad audience appeal is still basic. Bill Carver characterizes Stoney as "one of the best pitchmen in the business," a quality perhaps more desired of a musical entertainer in the earlier days of radio, when the performance pattern was different in a number of ways:

RC-Do you think pitching was more important when they were starting out playing on the radio?

BC-I think so, 'cause they had a closer relationship with the people. For instance, you were able to speak more direct to the people who you're working to; where now you've got somebody between you and the people--usually the announcer or front man who's usually in front of the audience. It makes quite a bit of difference to know that you're second or third down the line. But then, in those days you were talking more directly to the people. You were working to them in the show dates, and then you went out and either you'd speak to them direct or over the radio. And what they sold, they pretty much were sold on themselves before they would pass it on to the people. They would do that, they had confidence in it.

The emphasis on record sales in the present-day music industry has influenced many entertainers in their approach to live performances, but as Stoney explains, he and Wilma Lee have resolved to concentrate on giving a good performance each time they appear rather than continuously promoting a "latest release":

RC-It seems like you all are so much more effective on the Opry than some of the newer people, because you come across and put the audience at ease. It's a little bit more of a salesmanship thing than, you know, "knock 'em out with a hit record."

SC-Well, I'm glad you detected that, and I'll tell you why. Because you're a musician yourself, first of all; and you have detected that we're not going out there to knock 'em in the aisles. And the minute we get over that and just go out there and get an encore, that's when you do good work. And we stopped doing that because after "The Big Wheel" we tried desperately, floundering around to please this A & R man and this one--"get that big, big one." Look, that big one is what the people make big for you. And unless you can do it in its natural way and you have found that song that fits your image and what you handle best, forget it. So now we take an ordinary,

basically good song and go out and say, "Let's sing to the air audience, and maybe the people in here will like it, too." And they do.

Many times in live performances Wilma Lee and Stoney will do traditional or well-known numbers which they have never recorded. While under contract to record companies the Coopers have had problems with material--much of their repertory is not what the companies have considered "hit material" at the time, and many of the new songs and follow-ups on earlier hit material did not really fit their style. Because relations with a hit-oriented company have been constraining, Wilma Lee and Stoney now contract their own recordings individually, and, as Stoney explains, they have decided to select their own material and fully determine their own image:

Now we know. We listened to a few too many people, you see. This is what can happen to an act. Now, that's what I meant, I don't think we'll go with that studio, that company that wants to rule you, and "We're gonna look for a song." We, you know. "We're gonna look for a song for you." I don't think we'll ever want with that company again. I think we'll lease all of ours.

RC-Want to have your own head about it?

SC-Yes sir, we will do whatever we feel that we're capable of doing, and no more. And if they want them, fine; if they don't, then we'll put them out ourselves. I think we'll be ahead, don't you?

In this decision the Coopers are overcoming a conflict which has slowly been developing between their own pattern of performance and that of performers who place a higher stock in record sales. The fact that they themselves can best manage their own recording affairs attests to a live-performance orientation and an established audience. As Wilma Lee describes, their success began before recordings became the dominant media:

Really, we're a standard. We made our name in the days of radio, see, like Acuff. And you don't really have to have hit records.... Records really ruined the business for lots of entertainers, see, 'cause everybody can't be on the Grand Ole Opry, or everybody can't be on the Wheeling Jamboree. And there's not that many places for the entertainers to go now. So, really, the record business ruined the live entertainment part of radio stations for young talent getting started.

SC-"Cause I could pinpoint the map and show you the stations that had live talent, and I don't mean just one or two bands; I mean seven or eight, at

thousand-watt stations.
 WLC-Just all over; just everywhere.
 SC-All live talent.

In both their use of traditional material and the move to small label recording, Wilma Lee and Stoney have much in common with many bluegrass groups who presently find their audience somewhat out of the mainstream industry market. Although not regarded as strictly a bluegrass group, they have, in the course of their career, maintained many overlaps with the bluegrass style and repertory.⁸ Within the past several years Wilma Lee and Stoney have been frequently booked at bluegrass festivals, and here a new audience has been opened to them, one which again requires the ability to cope with live-performance dynamics. Their success with festival crowds reflects both that ability and the basic appeal of their music to any country audience whose tastes are traditional or retrospective.

For the most part, however, Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper still depend primarily on an air audience, one which responds to their per-

sonal appearances and to their sponsor's product. Record sales, in one way or another, are mainly promoted from a live performance situation, either on radio or at personal appearances. Their territory has greatly expanded, but the essential relationship to the audience is the same as when Wilma Lee and Stoney began on radio. They know that their best fans are those who have listened to them the longest, and they feel a responsibility to this audience for their popularity. Elkins, West Virginia, the town which was their original home base and where Wilma Lee attended Davis and Elkins College, honored them on 16 November 1973 with Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper Day. A dedicated turnout characterized this event, as has been the case at most of their personal appearances through the years. Wilma Lee and Stoney remember it as the most satisfying moment in their career and a true indication that their mode of music and entertainment, although a little out of phase with the hit-minded industry, is still enjoyed by an audience consisting of people rather than record sales statistics.

FOOTNOTES

1. Research for this project was originally submitted as a part of coursework under Dr. Henry Glassie at the Indiana University Folklore Institute. Quotations within the text are taken from the following interviews: with Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper (Nashville, Tennessee; 3 January 1974); with Jim Stanton (Johnson City, Tennessee; 5 January 1974); with Bill Carver (Nashville, Tennessee; 13 August 1974). The present article only scratches the surface of a rich vein of oral history open to those interested in country music. The Coopers are excellent interview participants, and I have been pleased to learn that Fred Williams of Kelley, Iowa, has begun a long-term, in-depth series of interviews with them. The fruits of his labor will complete this skeleton and, no doubt, supply much more detailed correlation with the discography that follows.

2. See Neil V. Rosenberg, Bill Monroe and his Blue Grass Boys: An Illustrated Discography (Nashville, 1974), 21-24.

3. The Checklist of Recorded Songs in the English Language in the Archive of American Folk Song to July, 1940, issued by the Library of Congress, lists the following entries "by Mr. & Mrs. Jake Leary, Ted Henderson, Wilma, Geraline, and Cathaline Leary--Tygart Valley homesteads, Elkins, West Virginia, (collected by) Gordon Barnes, 1939":

Crawdad Song 3574 B1

The Jericho Road 3574 B2

Old Black Mountain Trail 3576 A1 (Wilma Lee, Geraline & Cathaline),

There is no mention of the material collected from the Learys in Washington in 1938.

4. A 1966 publicity release by Bill Williams of WSM Public Relations reports that, while in Blytheville, Stoney won a national contest sponsored by Southern Farmer Magazine by selling 10,000 books over the air in three weeks.

5. There was some disagreement among my oral sources about the Rich-R-Tone sessions. For my conclusions and a summary of the evidence see the discography, footnote 2.

6. Neil Rosenberg reports that the Stanley Brothers (on Rich-R-Tone during the same period) also released their version of a song learned from Monroe, "Molly and Tenbrooks," before Monroe's recorded version was issued. See "From Sound to Style: The Emergence of Bluegrass," Journal of American Folklore 80 (1967), 143-44. Jim Stanton comments that in both cases he was unaware of any irregularity until the matter was later brought to his attention and the discs had already been out for some time.

7. Attesting to the rapid growth of their popularity in the WWVA listening area, the Harvard University Library of Music named Wilma Lee and Stoney as "the most authentic mountain singing group in America" in 1950. See Linnell Gentry, ed., A History of Country, Western and Gospel Music (Nashville, 1961), 208.

8. The Coopers' relatively early use of the five string banjo-dobro combination and borrowings from early Monroe gospel material are perhaps their strongest connections with bluegrass. Their secular repertory has also been influential to bluegrass; Wilma Lee and Stoney's versions of two older songs in particular, "Ruby (Are You Mad At Your Man)," which was taken from Cousin Emmy's version and recorded by Wilma Lee as "Stoney (Are You Mad At Your Gal)," and "Sunny Side of the Mountain," taken from the original by Big Slim, the Lonesome Cowboy, both were popularized by the Coopers' recordings and later became standards in the bluegrass repertory. For further mention of Wilma Lee and Stoney's exposure to bluegrass audiences and the musicians associated with bluegrass who have played in their band see Douglas B. Green, "Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper," Bluegrass Unlimited 8:9 (March, 1974), 25-7.



A RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION SONG SHEET

The film "Nashville" while reviewed during the early summer of 1975 in Newsweek, New Yorker, the New York Times, and the Washington Post was hailed because it made an explicit connection between political America and country music. The latter form was seen not exclusively as one touching cheatin' hearts or hayloft humor, but also as one capable of treating social violence and national rootlessness. I do not know when Tom Wicker or Pauline Kael first accepted country music's tie to political action, but I wish to assert here that the connection is indeed very old. In the sense that commercial country music was drawn largely from Anglo-American folk music, the linkage of country music to American political expression is as old as our nation. The point is visually demonstrated in the Colonial and post-Revolutionary War printed broadsides about hard times and other issues faced by our people.

This JEMF graphic feature reproduces a song sheet holding a political folksong "The Farmer Comes to Town" attributed to the 1860s. Although the item seen here is undated and carries no institutional name or emblem, it was actually issued during 1936 by the United States Resettlement Administration, perhaps the New Deal's most controversial agency. In my commentary I shall describe both the agency and the leaflet; an opening note on the song itself is also in order.

"The Farmer" was first published by folksong collector Carl Sandburg in his American Songbag (1927), page 282. The compiler was careful to indicate his oral source, S. K. Barlow, a Galesburg milkman. Presumably, Sandburg never found it in print in any of the farm journals of the 1870s and 1880s. We can infer that Sandburg was curious about its origin in that he asked W. W. Delaney (The New York publisher of countless inexpensive pocket songsters) to date it. Delaney's memory of its beginning just after the Civil War suggests that "The Farmer Comes to Town" might have been a Granger-inspired song. The National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry was organized in 1867 as the first of the major agrarian reform/farm populist organizations. If this song was in print prior to 1927 it has escaped the attention of scholars. Since 1927 various compilers of anthologies such as Alan Lomax, John Greenway, Eli Siegmeister, and Edith Fowke have borrowed the piece from Sandburg.

Actually, the song was "published" several

years before The American Songbag appeared, if we accept a sound recording as a form of publication. The first acoustical phonograph disc of this folksong was mastered by hillbilly-music pioneer Fiddlin' John Carson on a trip to New York, November 7-8, 1923. His sardonic "Farmer Is the Man That Feeds Them All" (Okeh 40071) was recently reissued on an LP, Fiddlin' John Carson in 1868, it is likely that the Georgia mountain fiddler learned this populist song at least as early as did the Illinois poet. With the text and tune of "The Farmer Comes to Town" available in both my graphic reproduction and on the Carson LP reissue, it would be redundant to dwell on the fact that this early farm song is radical in content.

What circumstance led anyone in a government agency four decades ago to issue a populist folksong in an attractively lithographed song sheet? This rhetorical question may seem strange in the administration of Gerald Ford and Earl Butz; it was not unseemly at the time of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Henry Wallace, and Rexford Tugwell. One of the main problems faced by FDR upon his inauguration in 1933 was that of chronic rural poverty. Bitter depression had come to the land long before the stock market crash of 1929. Not only were food and fiber prices depressed, but much marginal land was under cultivation, and additional acres were ravaged by wind and water erosion. Finally, many farm workers lived in virtual peonage as sharecroppers, harvest tramps, and casual laborers. Political responses to "the farm problem" varied but flowed basically from two diverse philosophical views. Briefly, many leaders saw agriculture as a business enterprise demanding technical and scientific skill to make it productive and profitable. Any farmer who could not compete as a businessman or technician was "invited" to leave the soil and swell the ranks of the urban poor. An alternate view saw agriculture as a way of life sanctified by Jeffersonian tradition and Christian morality. A farmer who failed was not to be driven off the land, but, rather, was to be assisted by the community or the government in preserving his agrarian style and status.

The body of literature on New Deal farm politics is immense; here, I shall cite but four key books:

Edward Banfield, Government Project
(Glencoe: Free Press, 1951).

Paul Conkin, Tomorrow a New World:
The New Deal Community Program
(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959).

Richard Kirkendall, Social Scientists
and Farm Politics in the Age of
Roosevelt
(Columbia: University of Missouri
Press, 1966).

Sidney Baldwin, Poverty and Politics:
The Rise and Decline of the Farm
Security Administration
(Chapel Hill: University of North
Carolina Press, 1968).

For purposes of this commentary we need state only that on 30 April 1935, President Roosevelt, by Executive Order 7072, established the Resettlement Administration under Rexford Tugwell and made it central in the fight against rural poverty. The RA initiated four basic programs: personal rehabilitation in the form of loans, debt adjustment, direct relief grants, and health service; land use and soil conservation planning and development; rural resettlement on new farms and in new community projects; suburban resettlement in newly constructed model communities (greenbelt towns). At year's end, 1936, the President transferred the RA to the Department of Agriculture. In September, 1937, following passage of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act, the RA was transformed into the Farm Security Administration, which itself lingered until 1946. The death of the FSA was protracted and bitter, after New Deal policies gave way to post-Pearl Harbor win-the-war drives. Conservative farm block Congressmen and Senators as well as American Farm Bureau Federation spokesmen viewed the FSA as an attempt to sovietize agriculture in the United States, and succeeded in abolishing the hated agency.

Farm historians will continue to be drawn to the RA-FSA's exceedingly controversial role, while cultural historians will continue to laud some of the creative endeavors of the two agencies. Best known today and best reported is the magnificent documentary photography project launched modestly in the RA by Rexford Tugwell's student and colleague, Roy Stryker, and continued in the FSA. A band of young men and women (including Walker Evans, Russell Lee, Dorothea Lange, Marion Post Wolcott, and others) in less than a decade took more than a quarter million remarkable photographs which have been used since the 1930s to illustrate that era. See for example: Roy Stryker and Nancy Wood, In This Proud Land: America 1935-1943 As Seen in the FSA Photographs (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1973).

Almost completely overlooked, by contrast, is the Resettlement Administration's pioneering music project directed for nearly two years

(November 1935-September 1937) by Charles Seeger. Ideally, we need a full autobiographical report by Seeger on his New Deal adventures in Washington. Complementary to such a personal account, we need a scholarly thesis on cultural work in the RA and parallel musical activity in the large Works Progress Administration (WPA). Hopefully, this graphics feature will spur both Seeger and a student to undertake overdue writing and research.

In a recent letter to me (24 June 1975), Charles Seeger condensed his RA experience into a few paragraphs. Academically trained in musicology, he worked during the early Depression years in New York within the Composers Collective, a group of professional musicians trying to assist the labor and radical movements by composing polemical music for meetings and demonstrations. Discovering hillbilly records in the collection of muralist Thomas Hart Benton during 1932, Seeger's appreciation of native folksong was deepened by direct contact with performers such as Aunt Molly Jackson, scholars such as George Pullen Jackson, and collectors such as John Lomax. In November 1935 he "jumped at an offer" of a Resettlement Administration job in Washington, partly to strengthen his own affection for American folksong, and partly to lend his energy to New Deal reform efforts.

Within the Resettlement Administration he held the title of Technical Assistant to Adrian J. Dornbush, Director of the Special Skills Division. In the RA's First Annual Report (1936), pages 88-91, Dornbush described the two-pronged responsibility of Special Skills: A service unit employing artists, designers, and technicians to assist all other divisions within the agency; A creative unit serving families in resettlement projects with their expressive needs such as singing, weaving, landscaping, and woodworking. This latter service was seen both as developing practical skills to supplement personal income of homesteaders as well as helping homesteaders--for the most part strangers to each other--to form social relationships and ties necessary in any community.

At this juncture it is helpful to report that well before the Resettlement Administration was launched, President Roosevelt had developed, under Harry Hopkins' direction, a large program of direct relief for farmers. The agency involved was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (12 May 1933). In time, Hopkins set up a network of federally financed but state-based rural rehabilitation corporations used to establish new communities for dispossessed citizens. In addition to the FERA, the National Industrial Recovery Act, Section 208, was also used to create new rural-industrial communities where stranded people might combine small scale farming with part-time factory work. These subsistence homesteads were designed to reduce some of the stigma of

direct relief, as well as to introduce rational notions of planned land use into the economy. An ideological base for such homesteads was found in the decades-old "back-to-the-land" movement as well as in our century-old infatuation with utopian colonies.

The President assigned the administration of the new subsistence homesteads to Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes; Mrs. Roosevelt took a personal interest in many of the communities and their dwellers. Through a complex of legal constraints and operational blunders, the Subsistence Homestead Division did not work well; hence, in April 1935 the President transferred the Interior Department's stepchild, as well as the FERA's rural community projects, to the newly created Resettlement Administration. This transfer proved particularly costly in political capital to Tugwell and his associates. These new greenbelt villages and towns were branded by critics as examples of governmental paternalism or as invasions of personal freedom. Ironically, conservative opponents of the RA seemed only to uphold the freedom of rural poor folks to be blown or tractored off their land.

Even in advanced New Deal agencies the use of music for community goals was not entirely accepted. Within its first year the Resettlement Administration had become vulnerable to political attack. Status quo-minded politicians could not accept programs for farm relief which altered established patterns of land use or which challenged class relations between sharecroppers and planters, migrants and ranchers. Drawing conservative wrath to himself, Rexford Tugwell, a Columbia University professor and "braintruster," became a New Deal lightning rod in Roosevelt's 1936 re-election campaign. At year's end he resigned from the Resettlement Administration. His successor, appointed by Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, was "Dr. Will" Alexander, son of an Ozark farmer, holder of a Vanderbilt divinity degree, and a veteran of the early interracial movement in Atlanta. Alexanders' credentials as a liberal were impeccable and as a youngster he had heard considerable folksong. Yet, when the RA was attacked, he found it difficult to defend its esoteric and unorthodox frills such as folksong.

I have tried here to show something of the near-overwhelming complexity in sketching the background of but one New Deal folksong leaflet. The song sheet of "The Farmer Comes to Town" is intrinsically interesting: a sharp pen-and-ink sketch, a traditional song both radical and humane in content, a singable musical transcription faithful to the folk idiom. If we did not know that it opened a Resettlement Administration series, that it represented Charles Seeger's efforts, and that it symbolized Rexford Tugwell's provocative values, the song sheet would still stand on its merits as a choice selection, well illustrated.

However, because something of the circumstance of its issue is known, we can use the song sheet as a passport into New Deal cultural history.

Despite a series of very useful books on many artistic aspects of the Works Progress Administration (Erwin Christensen, F. Jack Hurley, Richard McKinzie, Jerre Mangione, Jane Mathews, Francis O'Connor, William Stott) we have no single book that gives an overview of folksong collecting or folk music teaching on the WPA or any sister agencies. In my judgment, this lack deeply undermines serious attention to the ebb and flow in American folksong. I do not believe that the folk boom of the 1950s-1960s, nor the consequent shifts in American popular music, can be placed in perspective without knowing how Charles Seeger, Herbert Halpert, Ben Botkin, Alan Lomax, and their fellow government employees perceived their own New Deal work.

Charles Seeger, for one, placed some of his formulas in a mimeographed WPA manual "General Considerations for Music Directors in Leading Community Programs" (1 May 1936). This was actually a part of his Resettlement Administration assignment. In 1937 he expanded it into a "Music Manual"--a 46 page typescript, unpublished RA document. Seeger has also expressed his views in interview tapes for Ed Kahn, Richard Reuss, William Ferris, and other scholars. Essentially, Seeger knew that many of the farm families sheltered in New Deal subsistence homestead projects (in literary terms--the Jeeter Lesters and Ma Joads of America) carried a rich and ingrained musical tradition. This old-time folk music was intrinsically worth saving for esthetic purposes alone, but it also could be used socially to integrate new farm communities whose residents were divided by religious, economic, and regional loyalties. One cannot begin to understand this achievement of Resettlement Administration staffers unless one feels the beat of their belief that music bonded citizens together. Bringing either a singing teacher or a record player to a Cumberland Plateau homestead or to a San Joaquin Valley migrant labor camp was more than an act of entertainment; it was also an act of political commitment. Perhaps students of American life will see Seeger's RA work as analogous to that of Ben Shahn, an RA artist, decorating the schoolhouse walls of the Jersey Homesteads (since renamed Roosevelt, New Jersey).

When Seeger arrived in Washington in 1935 he had hoped to place 300 musicians in a network of homestead communities. He actually placed a dozen. One of the best was Margaret Valiant, a conservatory trained musician, who wrote a sensitive "Journal of a Field Representative" following the first six months of her 1936 assignment at Cherry Lake Farms, Florida. Her "Journal" is as good a New Deal cultural document as I have ever seen; hopefully, the JEMF can arrange to

have it reprinted for a contemporary audience. Miss Valiant taught music and learned folksongs; additionally, she wrote and produced a play for her homesteaders titled, "New Wine."

Much of the creative community work by Charles Seeger and his peers was ended when the Farm Security Administration supplanted the Rural Resettlement Administration, although some FSA musical activity within camps and homesteads lingered throughout the War. None of this work lived beyond the dismantling of the FAS. In a physical sense, the best survival of the RA music project is a full set of field disc recordings made by Sidney Robertson (supplemented by Seeger and Valiant) now deposited in the Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Song. These discs (AFS 3155 to 3313), which date from June 1936 to September 1937, are accompanied by a typescript bound book of RA field notes in the Archive.

Appended below is a carefully thought out statement about usage made by Mrs. Robertson when she arranged to deposit her Rural Resettlement Administration field discs in the Library of Congress. It illustrates but one example of a public folklorist's scrupulous concern for her relationship with the folk. It also illustrates a respect for the intrinsic worth of folk material.

Parallel to Resettlement Administration field recordings, the Library of Congress holds a file of RA song sheets like the one reproduced here. All were printed in black on white paper and uniform in size, 6 1/4" x 8 1/4". The list follows:

- 1) The Farmer Comes to Town
- 2) Cooperation Is Our Aim
- 3) Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe Corn
- 4) We Ain't Down Yet
- 5) Down in the Valley
- 6) The Dodger
- 7) The Buffalo Skinner
- 8) (Sweet Betsy from Pike)--prepared but not issued
- 9) Wayfaring Stranger
- 10) Bethlehem

To the best of my knowledge, none of these nine graphic items has ever been reproduced elsewhere subsequent to their original RA printing. Nor has their technical story been told. Charles Seeger knows the details best for he selected the songs and transcribed their music. Charles Pollock, brother of the famed artist Jackson Pollock, was responsible for the pen-and-ink sketched covers. (Number 2, alone, was a conventional grease crayon lithograph drawing.) Adrian Dornbush, himself an artist before becoming a New Deal administrator, supervised production of these song sheets. My impression is that Dornbush was an efficient public servant, sensitive to the needs of the rural poor, and committed to a high level of art work in government. How-

ever, I do not know whether he ever left a written or oral account of his Resettlement Administration experience. Such a discovery would become a prized cultural history document.

I shall expand this view of a single folksong graphic item with a brief chronology of the Resettlement Administration's song sheet project. My source is itself unusual--a file of more than 500 pages of carbon memos and reports written largely by Charles Seeger to Adrian Dornbush while they worked for the agency. This ephemeral material was donated by Seeger to the Library of Congress in 1967 and bound there. His title for the data was "Records, Music Unit" while the Library's cataloger placed it under U.S. Farm Security Administration, Special Skills Division, Music Unit, Miscellaneous.

Within a long report (10 December 1935) to Dornbush after a visit to the Westmoreland, Pennsylvania, Homesteads, Charles Seeger indicated that the residents could use a song book for the adult chorus. "It would be a very good thing for the Special Skills Division to provide such a book, buying in large quantities. But no book exists that is of sufficient excellence to be worth the while. We might make one up, eventually; or we might make up some supplementary sheets...." By 11 March 1936, he reported that the proposed song book was under way. Charles Pollock was getting up a dummy and Norman Gifford was checking song versions. Two days later Seeger gave Gifford a detailed memo on the total song book project, of which the preliminary leaflets were a part. On 18 May, Seeger listed his first seven songs and got down to specifics of cost and size. By 25 August he had samples of the first sheets at hand, and a listing of some 50 additional titles.

Seeger soon had welcome figures from the RA's reproduction section which indicated that the sheets could be produced at about 1/3 of a cent a piece in a quantity of 10,000 copies for each song, and he liked especially the fact that his sheets held fine drawings and were "related to American rural life and tastes" (1 October). On 18 December, Dornbush requested Seeger to send to the Secretary of the Carnegie Foundation a set of the "music pamphlets" and a letter covering their purpose. Next week "Bethlehem" (#10) had just come from the printer and four more were ready to go: "Betsy from Pike," (#8) "Cindy," "Solidarity," and "Phoebe" ("Old Grumbler").

On 4 January 1937, there was bad news. Dornbush had been informed from within the agency that there was no more money for the song sheets. Seeger began to search for alternate financing, turning to a sister agency, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Next, Seeger drafted a long letter (10 February) to Ellen Woodward of

the WPA sending her the issued set of nine song sheets and asking if her agency could continue the series. Also, Dornbush mailed to the Solicitor in the Department of Agriculture a detailed letter on the history of the song sheets. This letter drafted by Seeger on 16 February was a concise statement, alternately utilitarian and idealistic, expressing his view that these simple song sheets were morale building blocks in communities of depression-stranded people, rent by fear and prejudice.

Seeger again used a letter to an Iowa Extension Service home economist on 19 March to describe this project so close to his heart and to list additional titles in progress. At the same time Dornbush seemed to have worked out an arrangement for the Play Bureau of the Federal Theater Project (WPA) to accept finished art work and copy and to issue the remaining sheets. Apparently, the Theater people never completed this assignment. In April the scope of the Special Skills Division's work was reduced, and by the summer Congress indicated that the Resettlement Administration role was soon to be altered; in September the RA was transformed into the FSA. Dornbush went over to the new agency while Seeger eventually went on to non-governmental work with the Pan American Union. Most of the song sheets seem to have vanished; they do not show up in current folksong collections or New Deal anthologies.

From this sweeping overview I turn to a tiny detail touching two songs, widely apart in spirit and setting, which Charles Seeger recalls with some pleasure. The version of "Wayfaring Stranger" he used was drawn both from George Pullen Jackson's White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands, and from the efforts of one of the RA's music field workers, Rupert Wade Hampton. Seeger passed Hampton's "Wayfaring Stranger" on to Alan Lomax, who, in turn, gave it to Burl Ives. The latter made the piece an Ives "folk revival" trademark with his early concert tours and recording sessions. Interestingly, Hampton who helped "save" this old shape note folk hymn, was encouraged by Seeger to seek out some of the new industrial songs brought to mountain homestead projects by unemployed coal miners and textile hands in Appalachia. Seeger felt the need to study changes in traditional balladry made when the hill people composed fresh topical songs. An example of a poignant industrial piece, also passed on by Seeger to revival singers (including his son Peter) was found by Hampton at Rockwood, Tennessee. In the "Ballad of Barney Graham," a coal miner's daughter memorialized her father murdered by company gun thugs in a labor strike.

I have sketched both this Hampton detail as well as the large song sheet chronology because it is unusual to have specific data on any graphic reproduction at hand. Also, the chronology serves as a matrix for several questions. Why did the song sheets not carry the seal or name of the Resettlement Administration? Was there a conscious attempt at anonymity? Why did the full

songbook project never come to fruition? Was it lack of money or staff in an agency spending tens of millions of dollars on relief? Was there any behind-the-scenes maneuvering, which hid larger questions such as using tax funds for cultural work to help poor people? And if this question divided Resettlement Administration New Dealers, how much more seriously was it opposed by conservative opponents of Tugwell and Roosevelt?

This feature opened with a reference to "Nashville," a 1975 film linking country music and the violent politics of alienation. The folksong which Charles Seeger selected to open his Resettlement Administration publication series made a similar connection a century ago, but one of alienated farmers who could laugh and fight about their plight. In its short life during the mid-1930s the Resettlement Administration tried to assert that political power and cultural expression could be harnessed to reduce fear and hunger, to build community and comfort. It seems perfectly appropriate, in retrospect, that Charles Seeger borrowed from Carl Sandburg a wry political folksong for use by one of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's most challenging and challenged New Deal experimental agencies.

--Archie Green
University of Texas at Austin

APPENDIX: Reservations on use of field recordings made by Sidney Robertson for the Resettlement Administration SR 1-156 (AFS 3155-3303), 9 Nov. 1936-19 Sept 1937.

"Publication by the Government" is understood to mean the Farm Security Administration or other government agency which might undertake to distribute copies of these songs free or for no more than cost of printing. This was part of the basis of my understanding with the performers, who further agreed that scientific use of the material in any non-commercial way was legitimate. In order to allay suspicion that they were being "used" and cheated of legitimate return, it was necessary to be thus explicit. The collection was originally intended to be used as a source for song sheets to be issued by the government; and the records themselves were to be used in the training of recreational leaders in rural communities, and for study by musicologists. Publication was limited to the government and scientific journals, etc., because only on this basis could cooperation of performers be secured, since they were not paid for their time and effort. In the case of a composer drawing on this collection for thematic material, I believe the individuals who contributed their performance would agree that a composer's creative contribution would give him the right to dispose of his compositions as he sees fit. But publication of this material in collections commercially printed and distributed would constitute a breach of the performers' agreement with me, in my capacity as an agent of the Government. -Sidney Robertson

AMERICA'S LAND

RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION

WE HAVE wasted our land recklessly in the past. In floods and dust storms, in higher taxes and human suffering, we are all paying the price today.

The individual men who committed this waste did so ignorantly, not willfully. They followed the example of others, an example on which society as a whole had set its approval. Our riches were without limit, they thought. Let each man take what lies within his reach.

Harsh experience has dispelled this pleasant indifference. We have learned that our land, as well as our forests and minerals, must be conserved. We have learned that this is a group, not an individual, problem.

The Administration recognizes that the conservation of land is a primary duty of the Federal and State Governments. It recognizes that the people who depend upon the land are entitled to better social and economic benefits therefrom. The purpose of this booklet is to describe what one governmental agency, the Resettlement Administration, is doing to preserve the riches of America's land for the America that is to come.

R. G. TUGWELL, *Administrator.*

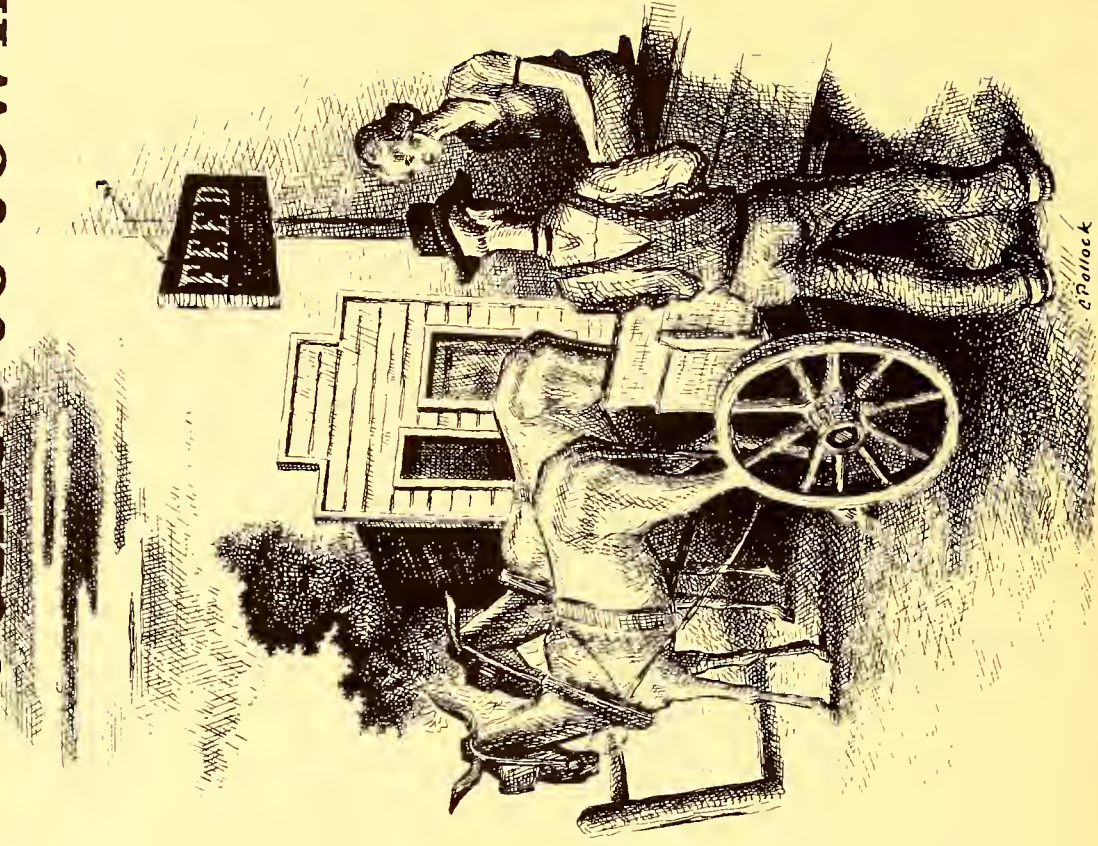
WASHINGTON, D. C., 1936

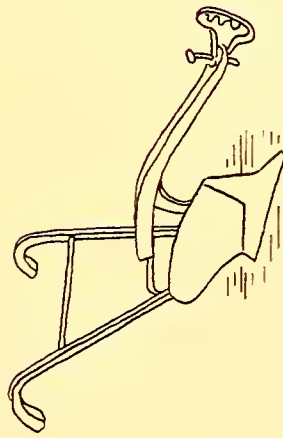
the FARMER comes to town

In his "American Songbag", Carl Sandburg says that he heard fragments of this song in Illinois in the early 1840's. "S.K. Barlow", he says, "a Galesburg milkman, who used to be a fiddler at dances near Galva, sang it for me as we washed eight and two gallon delivery cans and quart-measure cups on winter afternoons. W.W. Delaney said, 'As near as I can remember, that song came out in the 1860's, just after the war.'"

This is number
I
in a series
of American songs
rarely found in popular collections

Additional verses to this song
will be welcomed, as will be also
suggestions for future issues of the series.





THE FARMER



When the farmer comes to town, with his wagon broken down,
When the lawyer hangs around, while the butcher cuts a pound,



O, the farmer is the man who feeds them all.
O, the farmer is the man who feeds them all.



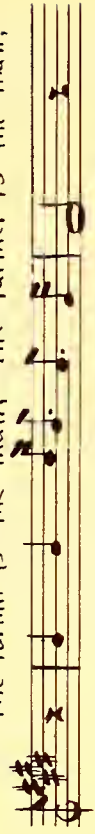
If you'll only look and see, I think you will agree
And the preacher and the cook Go a-strolling by the brook,



That the farmer is the man who feeds them all.
O, the farmer is the man who feeds them all.



The farmer is the man, The farmer is the man,
The farmer is the man, The farmer is the man,



Lives on credit 'til the fall;
Lives on credit 'til the fall;



Then they take him by the hand and they lead him from the land,
With the interest rate so high, It's a wonder he don't die,



And the middle-man is the man who gets it all.
For the mortgage-man is the man who gets it all

When the banker says he's broke And the merchant's up in smoke,
They forget that it's the farmer feeds them all.

It would put them to the test If the farmer took a rest,
Then they'd know that it's the farmer feeds them all.

The farmer is the man, The farmer is the man,
Lives on credit 'til the fall;

And his pants are wearing thin, His condition it's a sin,
He's forgot that he's the man who feeds them all.



Above: KLCN, Blytheville, Ark., 1946. L to R: Johnny Johnson, Bill Carver, Stoney Cooper, Carol Lee Cooper, Wilma Lee Cooper, Abner Cole.

Below: WWVA Jamboree, Wheeling, W. Va., 1955-56. L to R: Jimmy Crawford, Wilma Lee Cooper, Stoney Cooper, John Clark, Woody Woodham. Both photos courtesy CMF Library and Media Center.



WILMA LEE AND STONEY COOPER DISCOGRAPHY

This discography was compiled by Robert Cogswell from record company ledgers, discs, and personal interviews.¹ It is semi-complete, with some release dates and author credits missing. Additions and corrections are requested. The format is as usual, except that author/composer credits are given immediately following song titles, and release dates of singles are given in parentheses following release numbers (in day/month/year or month/year sequence). A period following session personnel indicates that work sheets for that session were located and listing should be complete; an asterick (*) indicates that this is not the case.

Rich-R-Tone. Summer 1947, Asheville, No. Carolina (at Station WWNC); and 31 Dec 1947, Wheeling, W.Va.
 Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and guitar; Bill Carver, elect. st. guitar, dobro, or (at Station WWVA).
 mandolin; Ab Cole, bass and vocal; Scotty McGinnis, accordion; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle.

7106	The Little Rosewood Casket	RRT 415
7108	What Will I Do	RRT 415
7109	Two Little Orphans	RRT 417
3124	Wicked Path of Sin (Bill Monroe)	RRT 417
4103	This World Can't Stand Long (Roy Acuff)	RRT 424
3107	Tramp on the Street (G. & H. Cole)	RRT 424
?	Matthew Twenty-Four (Lonnie Glosson)	RRT 442
?	My Dreamboat is Drifting (May Newberry)	RRT 442
?	Girl In the Blue Velvet Band	RRT 452
?	What Good Will It Do (Jerry Ward & Rose Maddox)	RRT 452
?	Blue Mountain Girl (Eddie Nesbit)	Unissued
?	5 other unidentified cuts	Unissued

Notes: Relevant ledgers from the Rich-R-Tone Record Co. were destroyed in a fire at the Acme Record Co. in Campbellsville, Ky. (a firm that pressed discs for RRT). Wilma Lee and Stoney recorded 16 cuts for RRT, 10 of which were released. 8 were recorded at the earlier session and 8 more at the later one, according to Jim Stanton (personal interview; Johnson City, Tenn., 5 Jan 1974). The only extant master that could be located was in Mr. Stanton's possession. It bore a WWVA label and the items were Wicked Path of Sin and Matthew Twenty Four. All persons interviewed agreed that there had been 6 unissued cuts. Of these, Wilma Lee could specifically recall Blue Mountain Girl; however, no others could be identified.

Columbia. 8 April 1949, Nashville, Tenn. (Castle Studio; Tulane Hotel).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Bill Carver, dobro; Ab Cole, bass; Blaine Stewart, mandolin; *

CO 40677-1	Willy Roy (The Crippled Boy) (Doc Williams)	Co 20586 (30/5/49), Har HL 7378
CO 40678-1	Thirty Pieces of Silver (Odell McLeod)	Co 20631 (10/10/49), Har HL 7233
CO 40679-1	What's The Matter With This World (J Anglin & J Wright)	Co 20631 (10/10/49), Har HL 7233
CO 40680-1	Moonlight on West Virginia (R Parker & E Parker)	Co 20607 (29/8/49)

Columbia. 9 April 1949, Nashville, Tenn. (Castle Studio; Tulane Hotel).

As above *

CO 40681-	No One Now (Sky Snow)	Co 20654 (26/12/49)
CO 40682-1	He Will Save Your Soul (From the Burning Fire) (Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper)	Co 20586 (30/5/49), Har HL 7233
CO 40683-	I Dreamed About Mom Last Night (Fred Rose)	Co 20654 (26/12/49), Har HL 7233
CO 40684-1	On the Banks of the River (D. Lewis)	Co 20607 (29/8/49)

Columbia. 20 February 1950, New York City (Columbia Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar or banjo; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Blaine Stewart, mandolin; Bill Carver, dobro or fiddle; Tex Logan, fiddle; T. Lucas, bass; *

CO 42881-	I Ain't Gonna Work Tomorrow	Co 20686 (17/4/50)
CO 42882-	The White Rose (T. Lucas)	Co 20713 (19/6/50), Har HL 7378
		Co 52012 (2/8/54)
CO 42883-	The Legend of the Dogwood Tree (J. Moore)	Co 20713 (19/6/50), Har HL 7233
		Co 52012 (2/8/54)
CO 42884-	The Message Came Special (W.L. & S. Cooper)	Co 20686 (17/4/50), Har HL 7378

Columbia. 18 December 1950, Nashville, Tenn. (Castle Studio; Tulane Hotel).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Blaine Stewart, mandolin; Ab Cole, bass; Bill Carver, dobro or fiddle; Gene Jenkins, elect. lead guitar or rhythm guitar; *

RHCO 4408-1	Faded Love (J. & B. Wills)	Co 20781 (29/1/51)
RHCO 4409-1	The Golden Rocket (H. Snow)	Co 20781 (29/1/51), Har HL 7378
RHCO 4410-	Mother's Prayer (Fowler)	Co 20801 (26/3/51), Har HL 7233
RHCO 4411-	The Ghost Train (O'Neal)	Co 20801 (26/3/51), Har HL 7378

Columbia. 13 July 1951, Nashville, Tenn. (Castle Studio; Tulane Hotel).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Buck Graves, dobro; Joe Stuart, mandolin; Ab Cole, bass; Tex Logan, fiddle or harmonica; *

CO 46488-	I'm Taking My Audition (To Sing Up In the Sky) (A. Patterson & W. Caplinger)	Co 20949 (31/5/52), Har HL 7233
CO 46489-	Walking My Lord Up Calvary Hill (Ruby Moody)	Co 20949 (31/5/52), Har HL 7233
CO 46490-1	All On Account of You (O. Reed)	Co 20898 (25/1/52)
CO 46491-1	Stoney (Are You Mad At Your Gal) (Cousin Emmy)	Co 21049 (5/12/52)
CO 46492-1	The West Virginia Polka (I. Louvin & C. Louvin)	Co 20861 (14/9/51)
CO 46493-1	Sunny Side of the Mountain (H. McAuliffe & B. Gregory)	Co 20861 (14/9/51), Har HL 7378

Columbia. 17 December 1951, Wheeling, W. Va. (WWVA Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Buck Graves, dobro; Ab Cole, bass; *

CO 47269-1	You Tried to Ruin My Name (P.W. King & R. Stewart)	Co 20898 (25/1/52); Har HL 7378
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Columbia. 21 May 1952, Nashville, Tenn. (Castle Studio; Tulane Hotel).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Tex Logan, fiddle; Buck Graves, dobro; Johnny Johnson, rhythm guitar; Ab Cole, bass; *

CO 47995-1	Have Mercy On Me (Weisman)	Co 21010 (12/9/52), Har HL 7378
CO 47996-1	I Cried Again (Inman)	Co 21010 (12/9/52)
CO 47997-1	The Clinch Mountain Waltz (S. Cooper)	Co 21049 (5/12/52)
CO 47998-1	My Lord's Gonna Shake My Hand (Clyde Moody)	Co 21000 (22/8/52), Har HL 7233
CO 47999-1	Will the Lord Let You In (Martha Carson)	Co 21000 (22/8/52), Har HL 7233

Columbia. 17 February 1953, Nashville, Tenn. (Castle Studio; Tulane Hotel).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Tommy Jackson, fiddle; Buck Graves, dobro; Ab Cole, bass; *

CO 49016-1	Idle Gossip, Idle Words (M. Carver)	Co 21161 (14/9/53)
CO 49017-1	Don't Play that Song (on the Juke Box Tonight) (C. Coben, E. Arnold & C. Grean)	Co 21088 (27/3/53)
CO 49018-1	What Can I Say (William G. Carver)	Co 21161 (14/9/53)
CO 49019-1	You Belong To Somebody Else (Adelman, Williams & Coben)	Co 21088 (27/3/53)
CO 49020-1	Are You Walking and A-Talking For the Lord (H Williams)	Co 21131 (26/6/53), Har HL 7233
CO 49021-1	You Can't Take It With You (When You Go) (M. Carson)	Co 21131 (26/6/53), Har HL 7378

Columbia. 28 December 1953, Nashville, Tenn. (Castle Studio; Tulane Hotel).

As above, but add Ab Cole, vocal; *

CO 50676-1	You Can't Feel the Way I Do (Carver)	Co 21221 (1/3/54)
CO 50677-1	Brand New Baby (Thomas)	Co 21265 (14/6/54)
CO 50678-1	Bamboozled (Barefoot & Stutz)	Co 21221 (1/3/54)
CO 50679-1	Can You Forget (Sturdevant)	Co 21265 (14/6/54)

Note: Titles of the two Harmony LPs are: HL 7233: Sacred Songs
HL 7378: Sunny Side of the Mountain

Hickory. 24 May 1955, Nashville, Tenn. (Hickory Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Eddie Hill, rhythm guitar; Chet Atkins, elect. lead guitar or rhythm guitar; Tommy Jackson, fiddle; Ernie Newton, bass; Bob Foster, ?; Jimmy Crawford, elect. steel guitar.

F-82-2	Each Season Changes You (Talley & Goree)	Hk 1035 (9/55), Hk LPM 100
F-83-1	Just For a While (Cooper & Crawford)	Hk 1028 (6/55)
F-84-4	How It Hurts to Cry Alone (J D Miller)	Hk 1028 (6/55)
F-85-4	Please Help Me To Be Wrong (Miller & Guillot)	Hk 1035 (9/55)

Hickory. 10 November 1955, Nashville, Tenn. (Hickory Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Chet Atkins, elec. lead guitar; Tommy Jackson, fiddle; Howard Johnson, rhythm guitar; Charles Theriot, ?; on F-106 and F-107, Al Terry, rhythm guitar and vocal, Floyd Cramer, piano, and Ernie Newton, bass; on F-110 through F-113, John Clark, banjo, and Woody Woodham, bass.

F-106-2	We Make a Lovely Couple (You and I)	(Billy Worth)	Hk 1041 (1/56)
F-107-2	Not Anymore	(Bob Terry)	Hk 1041 (1/56)
F-110-1	I Want to Be Loved	(J. & W. Bailes)	Hk 1043 (1/56), Hk LPM 100
F-111-2	This Crazy, Crazy World	(J. D. Miller)	Hk 1051 (5/56)
F-112-1	Row Number Two, Seat Number Three	(Perkins & Donato)	Hk 1043 (1/56)
F-113-2	I've Been Cheated Too	(Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1051 (5/56), Hk LPM 100

Hickory. 20 September 1956, Nashville, Tenn. (Hickory Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; on F-138 and F-139, Al Terry, rhythm guitar and vocal; *

F-138-	It's Just As Well	(Bob Terry)	Hk 1082
F-139-	I'm Not the Girl	(Thelma Blackmon)	Hk 1082
F-140-	This Thing Called Man	(J.D. Miller & T. Boulet)	Hk 1064 (4/57)
F-141	The Same as Never	(Terry, Smith, Terry)	Unissued

Hickory. 6 November 1956, Nashville, Tenn. (Hickory Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; John Clark, banjo; Walter Haynes, elec. steel guitar; Ernie Newton, bass; Carol Lee Cooper, vocal; *

F-142-	Loving You	(W. L. Cooper)	Hk 1058 (12/56)
F-143-	X Marks the Spot	(Louise Webb)	Hk 1098 (4/59)
F-144-	The Tramp on the Street	(Hazel & Grady Cole)	Hk 1058 (12/56), Hk LPM 100
F-145-	My Heart Keeps Crying	(Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1064 (4/57), Hk LPM 105

Hickory. 6 September 1957, Nashville, Tenn. (RCA Victor Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Chet Atkins, elect. steel guitar; Tommy Jackson, fiddle; John Clark, banjo; Woody Woodham, bass; Carol Lee Cooper, vocal; *

F-165-	He Taught Them How	(Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1078 (4/58), Hk LPM 100
F-166-	Diamond Joe	(Tex Logan)	Hk 1070 (10/57)
F-167-	I Tell My Heart	(Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1070 (10/57)

Hickory. 18 March 1958, Nashville, Tenn. (Bradley Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; John Clark, banjo; Jimmy Crawford, elec. steel guitar; Benny Martin, fiddle; Pee Wee Kirshaw, dobro; Carol Lee Cooper, vocal; *

F-179-	Come Walk With Me	(Burkett Graves)	Hk 1085 (8/58), Hk LPM 100
F-180-	Is It Right	(Don Gibson)	Hk 1085 (8/58)
F-181-	Big Midnight Special	(Arr. Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1098 (4/59), Hk LPM 100
F-182-	Walking My Lord Up Calvary Hill	(Ruby Moody)	Hk 1078 (4/58), Hk LPM 100

Hickory. 3 May 1958, Nashville, Tenn.

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Jimmie Elrod, banjo; Woody Woodham, bass; *

F-191-	The Canadian Reel	(Stoney Cooper)	Hk LPM 100
F-192-	Home Sweet Home	(Arr. Stoney Cooper)	Hk LPM 100
F-193	C & L Special	(Stoney Cooper)	Unissued
F-194	Swanee River	(Arr. Stoney Cooper)	Unissued

Hickory. 28 August 1959, Nashville, Tenn. (Bradley Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Benny Martin, fiddle or rhythm guitar; Howard White, Jr., elect. steel guitar; George Washington McCormick, rhythm guitar; Joe Zinkan, bass; Buddy Harmon, drums; Hank Garland, elect. lead guitar; James W. Elrod, banjo.

F-237-10	Heartbreak Street	(Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1126 (8/60)
F-238-2	There's a Big Wheel	(Don Gibson)	Hk 1107 (9/59), Hk LPM 100
F-239-9	Rachel's Guitar	(Jean Chapel)	Hk 1107 (9/59), Hk LPM 100
F-240-5	Night After Night	(Tompall Glazer & Wanda Jones)	Hk 1147 (5/61)

Hickory. 22 February 1960, Nashville, Tenn. (Bradley Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Woody Woodham, bass; Ray Edenton, rhythm guitar; Buddy Harmon, drums; Hank Garland, elect. lead guitar; Howard White, elect. steel guitar; George McCormick, rhythm guitar; James Elrod, banjo.

F-253-18	Johnny, My Love (Grandma's Diary) (Boudleaux & Felice Bryant)	Hk 1118 (3/60), Hk LPM 105
F-254-7	More Love (Ira and Charlie Louvin)	Hk 1118 (3/60)
F-255-5	This Old House (Stuart Hamblen)	Hk 1126 (8/60)

Hickory. 29 December 1960, Nashville, Tenn. (Bradley Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Ray Edenton, rhythm guitar; Buddy Harmon, drums; Hank Garland, elect. lead guitar; Jimmy Crawford, elect. steel guitar; Joe Zinkan, bass; George McCormick, rhythm guitar; Horace Ben Williams, banjo.

F-300-9	Train, You Took My Baby (Harlan Howard & Buck Owens)	Hk 1140 (1/61)
F-301-4	Heartaches Don't Lie (Mel & Juanita Foree)	Hk 1157 (11/61)
F-302-6	I Gotta Laugh (To Keep From Crying) (Don Gibson)	Hk 1140 (1/61)
F-303-8	Wreck On the Highway (Dorsey Dixon)	Hk 1147 (5/61)

Hickory. 10 October 1961, Nashville, Tenn. (Phillips Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Benny Martin, fiddle; Joe Zinkan, bass; Buck Trent, banjo; George McCormick, rhythm guitar; Larry Graham, drums; Marvin Russell, guitar.

F-334-5	Trouble Ahead (Bill Carver)	Hk 1179 (7/62)
F-335-2	The Mighty Battle Cry (Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1157 (11/61)
F-336-8	Doin' My Time (Jimmie Skinner)	Hk 1193 (11/62), Hk LPM 116
F-337-4	Have Faith In Me (Bob Ferguson)	Hk 1167 (4/62)

Hickory. 28 December 1961, Nashville, Tenn. (RCA Victor Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Floyd ("Lightning") Chance, bass; Buck Graves, dobro; George McCormick, guitar; Larry Graham, drums.

F-366-4	Matthew Twenty Four (Lonnie Glosson)	Hk 1167 (4/62), Hk LPM 106
F-367-2	Six More Miles (Hank Williams)	Hk LPM 106
F-368-3	Teardrops Falling In the Snow (E. C. McCarty)	Hk LPM 106
F-369-2	I'm Reading Your Letter Again (Floyd Jenkins)	Hk LPM 106
F-370-1	When God Comes and Gathers His Jewels (Hank Williams)	Hk LPM 106
F-371-2	Singing Waterfall (Hank Williams)	Hk 1193 (11/62), Hk LPM 106

Hickory. 5 March 1962, Nashville, Tenn. (RCA Victor Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Ray Edenton, rhythm guitar; Floyd Chance, bass; Benny Martin, fiddle; Larry Graham, drums; Shot Jackson, dobro.

F-386-2	Thirty Pieces of Silver (Odell McLeod)	Hk LPM 106
F-387-3	At the First Fall of Snow (Lorene Davis)	Hk LPM 106
F-388-2	Philadelphia Lawyer (Maddox Bros. & Rose)	Hk 1179 (7/62), Hk LPM 106
F-389-2	On the Evening Train (Audrey & Hank Williams)	Hk LPM 106
F-390-4	Help Me Understand (Hank Williams)	Hk LPM 116, Hk LPM 106
F-391-5	The Legend of the Dogwood Tree (Juanita Moore)	Hk LPM 106
F-421	Thirty Pieces of Silver (Odell McLeod)	Unissued
F-422	Help Me Understand (Hank Williams)	Unissued

Hickory. 29 January 1963, Nashville, Tenn. (RCA Victor Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar or banjo; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Buddy Harmon, drums; Floyd Chance, bass; Floyd Cramer, piano; George McCormick, rhythm guitar; Marvin Russell, elect. lead guitar; Ira Louvin, vocal on F-482 and F-483.

F-480-4	Every Hour and Every Day (Marshall Pack)	Hk LPM 112
F-481-3	Satisfied (Martha Carson)	Hk 1208 (2/63), Hk LPM 112
F-482-4	There's a Higher Power (Ira & Charlie Louvin)	Hk 1225 (9/63), Hk LPM 112
F-483-4	Keep Your Eyes on Jesus (Ira & Charlie Louvin)	Hk LPM 112
F-484-3	Family Bible (Gray, Buskirk, & Breeland)	Hk LPM 112
F-485-2	The Black Sheep Returned to the Fold (Fred Rose)	Hk LPM 112
F-486-2	The Way Worn Traveler (Arr. Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk LPM 112
F-487-4	Glory Land March (Johnny Masters)	Hk 1208 (2/63), Hk LPM 112
F-488-3	Wandering Soul (George Jones & Bill Dudley)	Hk LPM 112
F-489-2	This World Can't Stand Long (Roy Acuff)	Hk 1225 (9/63), Hk LPM 112
F-490-2	When My Time Comes to Go (Molly O'Day)	Hk LPM 112
F-491-2	The Story of the Three Nails (Hess & Benson)	Hk LPM 112

Hickory. 26 March 1964, Nashville, Tenn. (Bradley Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Harold Bradley, rhythm guitar; James Carlisle Isbell, drums; Henry Earl Sinks, rhythm guitar; William Frank Gokey, banjo; Joe Edwards, elect. lead guitar; John Shepherd Patrick, Jr., bass; Jerry Johnson, vocal.

F-633-5	I Couldn't Care Less (Don Gibson)	Hk 1279 (9/64)
F-634-6	Big John's Wife (Carver & Abner)	Hk 1257 (4/64)
F-635-7	This Train (Arr. Wilma Lee Cooper)	Hk 1279 (9/64)
F-636-6	Pirate King (Johnny Masters)	Hk 1257 (4/64)

Note: Hickory LP Titles and release dates are:

LP 100: The Big Wheel (3/60)
 LP 105: 15 Country Greats (by various artists) (1/62)
 LP 106: Family Favorites (5/62)
 LP 112: Songs of Inspiration (3/63)
 LP 116: Country Music Spectacular (by various artists)

Decca. 7 December 1965, Nashville, Tenn. (Columbia Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Hargus ("Pig") Robbins, piano; Joe Zinkan, bass; Grady Martin, guitar; Joe Edwards, guitar; Charlie McCoy, organ or harmonica; Buddy Harmon, drums; Ray Edenton, guitar; Harold Bradley, guitar; L. E. White, vocal; Hugh Stoker, vocal; Ray Walker, vocal.

NA 13822-	Wedding Bells (Claude Boone)	De 31891, De DL 4784
NA 13823-	It's Started Again (Don Gibson)	De 31891, De DL 4784
NA 13824-	It's Easier to Say than Do (John Patrick)	De 31971, De DL 4784
NA 13825-	Strange Things Happen Everyday (P.D.)	De DL 4784

Decca. 5 April 1966, Nashville, Tenn. (Columbia Studio).

Same as above, except Jerry Shook, guitar instead of Grady Martin and Harold Bradley; no harmonica.

NA 14011-	Tippee Toein' (Bobby Harden)	De DL 4784
NA 14012-	Nobody But a Fool (Would Love You) (Bill Anderson)	De DL 4784
NA 14013-	History Repeats Itself (Buddy Starcher)	De DL 4784
NA 14014-	Each Season Changes You (Ruth Talley & Albert Goree)	De 31971, De DL 4784

Decca. 13 June 1966, Nashville, Tenn. (Columbia Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Hargus Robbins, piano; Joe Zinkan, bass; Wayne Moss, guitar; Harold Bradley, guitar; Charlie McCoy, organ or harmonica; Willie Ackerman, drums; Joe Edwards, guitar; same vocalists as above session.

14144-	A Hero's Death (Lynn Davis)	De 32032, De DL 4784
14145-	Almost Persuaded (Glen Sutton & Billy Sherrill)	De DL 4784
14146-	Three Widows (Ralph Carter & L. E. White)	De 32032, De DL 4784
14147-	Don't Let Your Sweet Love Die (Clark Van Ness & Zeke Manners)	De 732482, De DL 4784

Decca. 17 March 1967, Nashville, Tenn. (Columbia Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Ray Edenton, guitar; Joe Zinkan, bass; Jerry Smith, piano; Harold Bradley, guitar; Weldon Myrick, elect. steel guitar; Buddy Harmon, drums; Joe Edwards, guitar; Hugh Stoker, Hoyt Hawkins, Carol (Cooper) Snow, Ray Walker, and Neal Matthews, vocals.

14601-	Never Very Far From My Mind	De 32136 (15/5/67)
14602-	Darling How Could You	De 32210 (23/10/67)
14603-	Time Keep Standin' Still	De 32210 (23/10/67)
14604-	The Birds Are Back	De 32136 (15/5/67)

Decca. 27 February 1969, Nashville, Tenn. (Columbia Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Ray Edenton, guitar; Joe Edwards, guitar; Ray ("Junior") Huskey, Jr., bass; Hargus Robbins, piano; Herman ("Pete") Wade, guitar; Weldon Myrick, elect., steel guitar; James Isbell, drums; Neal Matthews, Hoyt Hawkins, Ray Walker, Hugh Stoker, and L. E. White, vocals.

15451-A	Not My Kind	De 32581 (20/10/69)
15452-	The Right to Love (What's Left To Me)	De 32581 (20/10/69)
15453-	Guide Me Home, My Georgia Moon	De 732482 (14/4/69)
15454	Big Midnight Special (Arr. Wilma Lee Cooper)	Unissued

Note: Decca LP title is DL 4784: Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper Sing... (11/66)

Skylite Country. October 1972, Nashville, Tenn. (Woodland St. Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Tony Migliori, piano; Joe Zinkan, bass; Bill Carver, dobro; Joe Edwards, elect. lead guitar; Carol Lee Cooper, organ and vocal; George McCormick, rhythm guitar and vocal; ? Fox, drums; Jimmy ? , rhythm guitar; *

The Great Speckled Bird (Miller)	SC 7301
I Shall Not Be Moved (Arr. Pat Patterson)	SC 7301
Me and Jesus (Tom T. Hall)	SC 7301
Did You Think to Pray (M. A. Kidder & W. O. Perkins)	SC 7301
Thank God I'm Free (McFall)	SC 7301
That's Enough to Shout About (Ray Lewis)	SC 7301
I'm Using My Bible For a Roadmap (Reno & Shroder)	SC 7301
Lord, I'm Coming Home (Wm. J. Kirkpatrick)	SC 7301
Amazing Grace (P. D.)	SC 7301
To My Mansion (Jimmie Davis)	SC 7301

Note: The Skylite Country LP SC 7301 title is A Tribute to Roy Acuff: The Great Speckled Bird (4/73)

Power Pak/Gusto. 27-28 December 1973, Nashville, Tenn. (L. S. I. Studio).

Wilma Lee Cooper, vocal and rhythm guitar; Stoney Cooper, vocal and fiddle; Bill Carver, dobro; Joe Edwards, elect. lead guitar; George McCormick, rhythm guitar and vocal; Bill ?, bass; Carol Lee Cooper, vocal; *

Walking My Lord Up Calvary's Hill (Janet Moody)	PO 242
Give Me the Roses While I Live (James Rowe & R.H. Cornelius)	PO 242
Tramp On the Street (Grady & Hazel Cole)	PO 242
Thirty Pieces of Silver (Mac Odell)	PO 242
This Old House (Stuart Hamblen)	PO 242
The Drunken Driver (Lynn Davis)	PO 242
The Great Speckled Bird (Ray Carter)	PO 242
I'm Going Home On the Morning Train (Molly O'Day)	PO 242
I Dreamed About Mama Last Night (Fred Rose)	PO 242
Wreck On the Highway (Dorsey Dixon)	PO 242
Little Rosewood Casket (P.D.)	PO 242
The Legend of the Dogwood Tree (Janet Moore)	PO 242
When I Lay My Burden Down	Unissued

Note: The Power Pak LP PO 242 is titled Walking My Lord Up Calvary Hill (3/74)

JEMF RECEIVES GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

The JEMF has been awarded a grant of 16,000 for the period of September 1975 through August 1976 from the National Endowment for the Arts to expand its LP record program. The project, one of two proposals informally submitted to the Folk Arts section of the NEA for consideration last winter, was originally conceived with the purpose of making the JEMF record program fully self-supporting by funding, over a two-year period, the number of albums necessary to reach that critical level. The amount granted falls short of that goal but will still be indispensable in carrying out several contemplated album projects. These include some albums that are felt to be of historical importance, but of limited esthetic appeal, and therefore not likely to be highly successful in terms of sales. The proposal outline stressed the intent of the JEMF to explore types of sound recordings other than 78 rpm commercial discs and electrical transcription recordings, which were the basis of the three albums already issued. These could include out-of-print LP recordings, non-commercial field recordings, movie sound tracks, and new recordings to be made explicitly for this series.

The JEMF has hired Paul Wells, a former UCLA graduate student in folklore (he received the M. A. degree last year) and former part-time JEMF employee, to assume the role of project manager for the record project. In addition to overseeing many technical details of the overall operation, Wells will pursue some of his own research interests and edit one or more albums himself. Other albums will be edited by qualified specialists. The terms of the grant call for four albums to be produced during the coming year. Individual albums will be announced in JEMFQ as they near completion.

VERNON DALHART: COMMERCIAL COUNTRY MUSIC'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL STAR

by Walter Darrell Haden

[The following article is an expanded version of Prof. Haden's chapter on Vernon Dalhart in Stars of Country Music: From Uncle Dave Macon to Johnny Rodriguez, to be published this fall by the University of Illinois Press.]

The first country music recording artist to attain an international following for himself and commercial country music was Vernon Dalhart. Coming to the Bronx of New York City from Dallas with his wife and two small children in 1910, the twenty-seven year-old Texan took his professional name from Vernon and Dalhart, Texas. These were the towns between which he had punched cattle as a teenage cowboy in the second half of the 1890s. Vernon Dalhart brought to the big city a variety of additional work experience which included clerking in a Dallas hardware store and delivering pianos for a music store in that city. But along with the vocal training he had gained at the Dallas Conservatory of Music, the young Texan brought chiefly a drive to become a successful professional singer of grand and light opera. He was to attain that goal and in addition become a well-known popular music recording artist. However, his greatest success would be the launching of the commercial country music industry with his first two country recordings, "The Wreck of the Old '97" and "The Prisoner's Song" in 1924. Dalhart's most longlasting reputation would come from his use of the wealth of folk roots he could hardly leave behind him.

Vernon Dalhart was born Marion Try Slaughter, 6 April, 1883, to a northeastern Texas rancher and his wife, Robert Marion Slaughter and Mary Jane Castleberry Slaughter. Wallace Johnson, a childhood friend who played with Dalhart in the cedar shade protecting the ranchhouse, remembers Robert Slaughter as "a fine-looking red-faced man" and Dalhart's mother as "a beautiful woman." The couple had married in nearby Jefferson in 1880. An only child, Dalhart appears to have spent at least his pre-school years on the 500-acre ranch where his uncle, Will Slaughter, and Robert Slaughter grew "domestic cattle... cotton, peas and corn" on "creek bottom land and hill land" around three miles from the Marion County Seat. The foundation stones of the birthplace still remain. It was a one-story frame house of simple construction: four large rooms connected by a hall running from front to back door. Dalhart himself mentioned in a letter to his chief collector Marion Hoffman his learning

to play the harmonica at this ranchhouse before he was four years old.

Even eighty-six years after the singer's birth, what were Dalhart's old "stomping grounds" have been described by a National Education Association commission as "the western edge of the Old South." At the close of the Civil War, Jefferson was the state's second largest city, "the Emporium of the Southwest," as one geographer gilded it. Dozens of luxury steamboats like The Lizzie Hopkins, Music and The Texas Ranger were hooting up the Cypress Bayou River and making Jefferson the shipping center for northeast Texas. Before the war a slave and cotton-based economy had produced a planter class, an Old-South architecture and atmosphere whose facsimiles survive well over a century later, Jefferson's Excelsior House, dating from the late 1850s, is still a gracious, hospitable hotel. Just over one hundred years ago, Jay Gould, the "Wizard of Wall Street," thwarted by the city fathers' refusal to donate right-of-way for his Texas and Pacific Railroad, signed the hotel registry and scrawled at the bottom of the page, "The end of Jefferson, Texas." Elaborated, his prophecy said that "grass would grow in the streets and bats would inhabit the vacant business houses and church belfries." The Robber Baron's transportational vengeance together with the U.S. Corps of Engineers' lowering the town harbor and Cypress Bayou River to flood-conditions-only navigation worked an inevitable economic squeezeplay on what had been a boom town of 30,000.

Jefferson was noticeably inland and on the wane, then, in the decade of Dalhart's birth, shipping only one-third of the cotton in 1885-86 that it had exported in 1875-76. In desperation Jefferson businessmen who had feared Gould's iron monster would frighten drayhorses, mules and oxen had financed their own East Line and Red River Railroad from Jefferson to El Paso before Dalhart's birth. (That spur line would give the young man his first acquaintance with an industry figuring prominently in scores of songs he would choose to record, such as "Casey Jones," "In the Baggage Coach Ahead,"

"The Little Red Caboose Behind the Train," "The Run-Away Train" and the first country song he would record--commercial country music's first national and international hit, "The Wreck of the Old '97"). Dalhart's friend Jesse DeWare worked at the Jefferson Depot, and on some nights the future singer and other of his boyfriends would congregate to celebrate the arrival of the midnight train, "the Katy," by firing off pistols and rifles. ("The Old Kitty Kate on the Mississippi Line"; "Watching the Trains Come In").

But Dalhart's hometown had failed to fulfill its Gilded Age promise as an important industrial and cultural center, apparently because of the drying up of cheap transportation. Much of one bank's two million dollar capital moved westward with expanding railheads and new business opportunities. Also moving out were many of the two hundred Jefferson businessmen listed with Dun and Bradstreet the year Gould's grand entrance behind an imported black brass band failed to rush an agrarian town into the arms of industrialism. The "Eleven Cent Cotton, Forty Cent Meat" of Dalhart's late 1920s recording was becoming a reality for Jefferson in the singer's youth.

Whether it was the worsening economy of the late 1880s or some other reason that caused Robert M. Slaughter to move his wife and son from the ranch into Jefferson, the family's remove did occur, although the date is uncertain. Perhaps his parents wished him to attend one of the town's private schools. Friends from Dalhart's childhood in the country and from his later youth in the county seat recall that his Jefferson-born mother, especially, insisted that her son have religious, social and other cultural advantages that might not be so accessible to him in a rural community. According to a Dalhart friend from the ranch years--Wallace Johnson, a black man--Marry Jane Castleberry Slaughter, daughter of Jason Castleberry, deplored the roughneck atmosphere she felt her son was exposed to in Marion County. Her father was not only an erstwhile dairy man and hotelkeeper; he was also a Baptist preacher. Among other members of the clergy-man's family, there was D. J. Castleberry, whose "Bar and Billiards" was advertised in the Weekly Times and Republican in 1869; in 1870 another Castleberry advertised as co-proprietor of the "Brilliant Saloon."

In the final decades of the century, Line Street, where the sub-teenage and then teenage Dalhart would live, forked with one branch veering left toward Cypress Bayou River and "Murder Alley." A local history avers that "one and often two dead bodies would be found each morning in this alley" during the once-proud town's continued decline. When country singer Dalhart recorded "The Bully of the Town," "Pass Around the Bottle" and "Razors in De Air," he knew where of he sang.

However, the whole northeast Texas area

had earned a reputation for violence a full forty years before Jefferson fell upon hard times. Wanted men escaping west into the area had given it the unenviable sobriquet of "Badlands." Local lawmen were not infrequently like the sheriff Marion County elected the year after Dalhart's birth. This sheriff Taylor was hardly of the gently Andy Griffith mold: the Jefferson-based Taylor had been acquitted of all charges for issuing a dueling challenge and then killing his rival in a shoot-out on a downtown street--this, only eight years before assuming the sheriff's office. But Taylor had been dealt the full administration of Jefferson justice only three years before his election, in fact: The future sheriff had been fined ten dollars for gambling in a Jefferson "house" illegally trafficking--among other vices--in "spiritous liquors." In lieu of justice in the area, rival clans of vigilantes--"Regulators" and "Moderators"--vied as early as the 1840s to determine with arms whose variant of law and order would be enforced. Lawlessness rode roughshod certainly during the Reconstruction era as the local Ku Klux Klan Klavern and a Jefferson chapter of the "Knights of the Rising Sun" turned to violence against newly enfranchised black men, federal officials, army personnel and Scalawags (Southern sympathizers with Tennesseean Andrew Johnson's Administration).

Dalhart's grandfather, Marion Try Slaughter I (born in Richmond, North Carolina, in 1826), was one of more than fifty Jefferson "Knights" caught with their armor down in 1868. The Confederate soldier's home had been burned by Union sympathizers somewhere between Vernon and Dalhart, Texas, during his service with the Confederate States of America (C. S. A.) Slaughter moved his wife--a widow, Eueline J. Crutcher with three children--and their three children--Robert Marion, Eva and Willie W.--to what was Davis County (now Cass County) at the close of the Civil War, settling in the county seat of the newly created Marion County, formed from Cass and Harrison counties. Slaughter and his Jefferson compatriots were arrested and charged with violation of Reconstruction statutes which had sometimes held Jefferson under martial law-like conditions. The colorful unreconstructed Rebel, an arm lost during his service in the late war, scaled a fifteen-foot high log stockade in which he and other recalcitrants had languished for months. With guards firing, Dalhart's grandfather went over the wall, thanks to the ladder that a twenty dollar gold piece could bribe from a Federal sentry. When troops threatened to search the warehouse basement in which the escapee was hidden, its owner warned, "All right, but what if there is a bulldog down there?" There was no further search of the warehouse on Dallas Street. The cocky progenitor of a singer who would himself sometimes be described as "can-

tankerous" later sent a message twitting the Federals of "Sand Town" stockade, reminding them that he was innocent of any crime (he had not been tried for any) and warning that if charges were not dismissed, he would single-handedly "ambush" the officers and their entire retinue. To this day legends flourish in Jefferson of Dalhart's flamboyant grandfather. Some of them mistakenly identify M. T. Slaughter I as the archetypal "Bully of the Town" (Dalhart recorded at least three different versions) even though there was such an American folk song many years before Vernon Dalhart would choose and record the folk-based songs signaling the rise of early commercial country music.

The one-armed "Bull Dog" himself was a Marion County deputy sheriff (1880-1884) at the time of his famous grandson's birth. By the time the singer was one year old, M. T. Slaughter I, had accepted appointment as a Jefferson constable--these honors of office falling upon him only three years after the volatile C.S.A. veteran had been arrested for assault and battery, i.e., striking one Squire Johnson, the Marion County Justice of the Peace, "with a stick 4 June, 1877." Slaughter paid his ten dollar fine and four months and one day later, he was repeating the offense upon the unfortunate Squire, this time hurling a rock and striking Johnson with "a piece of scantling...with intent...to kill and murder the affiant."

Robert Marion Slaughter, Dalhart's father, was hardly to be outdone by his pugnacious father. The rancher son, who "went with his head up all the time and looked like he was on the alert for anything that could happen," was to carry on what seems to have been a family tradition, although not with the previously besieged J. P.: "#847 The State of Texas vs. Bob Slaughter: Aggravated assault...cutting of Isaac Walker with a knife on December 5, 1883. Case Dismissed." The day after the altercation, the accused's son was eight months old. Bob Slaughter's preferred weapon was still quick less than four years later: The charge: "Assault on Haywood Jones on November 5, 1887 with a knife. Found Not Guilty."

Less than seven years later, the eleven year-old Vernon Dalhart would lose his father as Bob Slaughter fell dead into a ditch out the backdoor of Kahn's Saloon in Jefferson's notorious Murder Alley, knifed to death by his wife's brother.

Bob Castleberry, the singer's uncle, was indicted for murder 14 June 1893. Cryptically, the court records show that less than two weeks later Castleberry was acquitted, paying court costs of twenty dollars. Jeffersonians still declare the acquittal suggests a murder committed in self defense. After Robert Slaughter's murder, Will Slaughter sold the ranch to his

black neighbor Frank Johnson, father of the previously quoted Wallace Johnson.

The fatherless boy was soon proficient with a rifle, among other weapons of self defense, by or before he turned thirteen. The late James E. Hale said his earliest and most vivid recollection of Try Slaughter--as the young Vernon Dalhart was called--went back to Hale's sixth or seventh year when he followed his older friend, "an excellent shot," picking up robins as Slaughter's firing dropped them. "My mother used to buy some of the robins from him." Hale believed Dalhart and the widowed Mrs. Slaughter moved away from Jefferson "soon after 1895," or in other words when the boy was twelve or thirteen. This is too early, however, for Dalhart's permanent removal from Jefferson according to others who knew him as a youth.

The late Elbert A. Wise, a classmate of Dalhart's years in the Jefferson "Market Place" Grade School and high school, was born four months after his friend. He remembered that Try Slaughter liked to "run with older boys":

Try was a normal boy like the rest of us and well-liked by his classmates. He was well-built physically and I would say real nice looking. He was active in all school activities and especially where music was concerned.

He started singing here as a boy when he was twelve or thirteen. He had a friend that sang with him lots, W. T. (Will Turk) Adams.... Miss Mary Douglas Adams... a sister to W. T.... helped Try with his music... though she didn't give him music lessons. She and W. T.'s voices blended together with Try's so he would go to their house and practice. The Adamses were my cousins, and I used to have the old piano Mary Douglas played when they practiced, but I gave it away.... Try also got some help from a music teacher here, Miss Holer. Try sang all popular songs of that era and some religious ones.

The late James Hale recalled that Dalhart was "a handsome young man with beautiful wavy hair. I thought he was very smart, and he was always nice to me." Hale's sister May Belle, a Jefferson music teacher, sometimes played piano accompaniment for the future star when Dalhart visited with these neighbors two houses away from his Line Street home. It was May Belle Hale who gave the young man his first instruction in the study of music.

The late Miss Eva Eberstadt of Jefferson, Dalhart's senior by only a few years, was the pianist for the singer at a number of musical

entertainments in their hometown and in surrounding communities. She said that no matter what kind of music the "dark, handsome" Dalhart was singing, he was "always well received." Miss Eberstadt had enlisted Try Slaughter as a volunteer singer in a musicale she was producing in the mid-nineties in Jefferson. She, Dalhart, "Turk Adams" and several other singers and musicians considered forming a traveling troupe with her as the manager, but their plans did not materialize. Apparently the young man's attractive voice and personality were bringing him the social acceptance and respect his mother craved for him. During the several days I spent in Jefferson in 1972, I interviewed eighty-eight year-old Daisy Bower, one of his classmates whom the teenage singer escorted to parties. She remembered him as "well mannered and an excellent dancer."

Today very few residents of Jefferson know anything about the man who is really the town's most famous celebrity. While over fifty homes bear historical markers, only a few loose bricks remain of the house where Dalhart grew up on Line Street. The excellent local museum had no information about his life and career before this research was begun. The public library had only the singer's birth and death dates.

Just two years after his father's death in a Jefferson saloon, Dalhart during his summer vacation from school was holding down a cowherding job in northwest Texas. A Victor catalog in the early 1920s lists the singer's earliest occupation as "cowpuncher." And The New York Times obituary of 17 September 1948, refers to Vernon and Dalhart, Texas, between which he drove cattle, as "dear to his childhood." A CBS press release of 1929 dates that as early as his twelfth year, "Vernon was punching cattle and crooning cowboy songs." Musicologist Jim Walsh attests further that Dalhart "had grown up in the heart of the Texas ranch country and had become familiar with cowboy songs such as 'Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie.' Somewhere along the way he had become an expert player of the mouth-harp and he was an accomplished whistler."

Why a boy of his age would travel from the northeastern part of the state to the northwestern extremity of the Texas Panhandle to herd cattle is unknown. However, my research has uncovered the fact that Texan Christopher Columbus Slaughter, founder of a succession of the Slaughter Ranches which flourished all the way from near Salt Lake City east to central Texas sometimes sold cattle to a Jefferson packer in the late 1860s. Whether he and the Slaughters, who were retired in Dallas, may have helped Dalhart and his mother find employment in that city.

In any case, the summer cowboy dropped out of the Jefferson High School, probably at the end of his freshman or sophomore year. Elbert Wise

said Dalhart "was in the first grades in high school when he quit. Like most of us boys, he went to work. But his job took him to Dallas with his mother."

Wallace Johnson, born in 1889, recalls that not a great while after

Mr. Bob got killed, Miss Mary left because she didn't think the environment was what it should have been for her son... They came back on a visit... He (Dalhart) had a rifle--He was an expert rifleman... We had some lightning rods up on the house... so he got to pranking around. I think my brother shot and missed... and Mr. Try shot... and so we heard... glass fall... them round glass balls... The second time he came back... he said to my father, "Frank, I'm so glad I left from around here I don't know what to do!" Said, "This environment 'round here would have made me a bad man... Since I left here"--I think he went to Dallas--he says, "I've joined a church," and says "I sing--I'm a tenor singer. I sing in the choir every Sunday morning... They pay me ten dollars a Sunday..." Says "My mother, she didn't think this was the best place for me, and I found out it wasn't..." I imagine it was like when God told Abraham..."Get away from your folks."

There is a discrepancy between at least two published accounts of the singer's age at the time he and his mother left Jefferson. The July 1921 Edison Amberola Monthly states that Dalhart was sixteen when he "moved to Dallas... where he worked in a hardware store." The C.B.S. "Majestic Theatre of the Air" press release for Dalhart's 1 September 1929 network show reports that he "at fifteen... was working in a Dallas hardware store and singing blithely behind the counter."

Mary Jane Slaughter and her son had non-Slaughter relatives in Dallas who may have helped to make their move from the diminishing Jefferson to a thriving Dallas less of an adjustment than it might have been. One of Dalhart's cousins was Guy Massey, who in 1924 would receive credit, at least on the sheet music and record labels, for composing Dalhart's international hit, "The Prisoner's Song."

The date when Try Slaughter turned from hardware clerk to hustler of pianos for a Dallas music store is uncertain, as are the dates of his study at the Dallas Conservatory of Music. However, early after the turn of the century he married Sadie Lee Moore-Livingston in that city. She appears to have moved from Canada

to Dallas with her mother in the late 1890s. Mrs. Dalhart, an Episcopalian, then joined the First Baptist Church of Dallas, where her mother-in-law was a member and her husband a member and paid soloist. About 1902 or 1903 a daughter, Janice, was born to the Slaughters; on 10 October 1904, Marion Try Slaughter III was born.

It is not known whether Dalhart had any connections through friends in the northeastern music industry or through, for instance, The Dallas Conservatory of Music or Dallas music store employment which would encourage his move to New York. The New York Herald Tribune obituary avers he moved on "recommendation of his teacher." With a wife and two children to support, the singer would have had to have, it would seem, some job security promised in New York in order for him to undertake a move of close to 1500 miles in 1910. The trip was most likely accomplished by railroad with the young family's immediate settlement probably in a Bronx brownstone apartment. Dalhart's first employment appears to have been in a music store, perhaps selling and helping to deliver pianos. The July 1921 Edison Amberola Monthly gives the most plausible explanation for Dalhart's move to New York. The Edison writer refers to the singer's hardware store employment in Dallas, where "his happy disposition kept him constantly singing at his work. One day a French-Canadian vocal teacher heard him singing and advised him to study. He took the advice lightly, but when some other voice culture experts said the same thing, he gave it serious consideration and finally saved enough money to go to New York. There he worked as assistant shipping clerk in a big piano house from 7 A.M. to 6 P.M., and studied after working." It is thought, too, by members of his family interviewed that Dalhart did vocal work as a paid soloist in various New York City churches while finding frequent employment as a funeral vocalist for various mortuaries. At the same time it is believed he pursued further voice training with one or more instructors of operatic singing in the city and may have been giving lessons himself in "voice placement," as he was to do in his Mamoroneck, New York and Bridgeport, Connecticut retirement years. Of course he continued to audition for roles in grand and light opera companies, the aspiration that had brought him east. It may be, too, that Dalhart also was singing in vaudeville and in other New York variety shows the black "Mammy" songs he knew both from Texas and from the repertoires of popular recording artists like Al Jolsen and Eddie Cantor. This was a vein his own recordings would exploit frequently between 1916 and 1924. As yet neither Dalhart nor the folks back home in Texas seemed to suspect that his settlement in New York City would bring the country-grounded singer into fruitful cross-pollination with a budding country music industry he would bring to first bloom.

In 1912 Dalhart finally broke into grand opera, winning a minor role in Puccini's The Girl of the Golden West with a New York opera company, only two years after the work's world premier in that city. His creditable performance in this production led to his landing the leading role of Ralph Rackstraw in the 1913 revival of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta H. M. S. Pinafore by the Century Opera Company. This role he sang also in the long-running road production of the operetta after the New York production closed at the famous old Hippodrome Theatre in 1914. Among the other operas in which he appeared, Dalhart also had the leading role of Lieutenant Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton in Puccini's Madame Butterfly. But it was following his work in H. M. S. Pinafore that Dalhart entered the recording industry.

According to the late Bobby Gregory--in 1929 a collaborator with Dalhart on song writing ("The Wreck of the Circus Train," "A Rope Around my Picture," "Hoopy Scoopy," etc.) and accordionist on some of the singer's sessions cut in that year--the light opera tenor had run short of engagements when he saw an advertisement in a New York Newspaper: "Wanted: Singers for recording Sessions." In Gregory's words, the out-of-work singer

hadn't even had a funeral to sing for lately, so he spent his last money to go over to East Orange, New Jersey He thought, there will be only two or three guys there to try out. When he walked into this room, there were about ten singers auditioning, had already auditioned or waiting to be auditioned. And some of them were big shots. I mean he recognized these guys with big tenor voices and all that.... My God! how can I compete with those guys, he said to himself. And when it came around to his song, he did... "Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin', Caroline?" And so he auditioned for it and went out to sit in the office to wait for the call, and later one of the office men came out, and he said, "All of the singers will be dismissed except Vernon Dalhart. Will you kindly step into the office? Mr. Edison (Thomas Alva) wants to speak to you." And he told the other singers, "You will hear from Mr. Edison by mail."... Edison was deaf, you know, and had to use an ear trumpet to hear what was going on, so he asked Dalhart, "Would you sing this song up close to my ear, the same one you auditioned?" Dal told me how he leaned into Edison's hearing aid and sang "Can't Yo' heah me callin', Caroline, Caroline, Caroline." ... He looked down, and Edison was smiling and said to him, "You are the man for me."

Musicologist Jim Walsh believes the first notice indicating that Dalhart was a recording artist appeared in The Edison Diamond Discs Catalog for June 1915. Almost at the bottom of the list of "Artists Who Have Made or Will Make Edison Records" is the announcement: "VERNON DALHART, Tenor. American tenor of experience in Grand Opera and Operetta." It was two years, however, before Edison mentioned his name again in any company publication. Walsh believes that the singer may have cut some sides in the interim which Mr. Edison may have rejected in their trial recordings. The June 1917 Edison Diamond Points advertises Dalhart's first release, Blue Amberol Cylinder, No. 3185 "Can't Yo' Heah Me Callin', Caroline?" A convincing Southern black dialect coupled with the singer's obvious flair for histrionics helped to make this initial recording of the several hundred songs Dalhart was to cut for Edison one of the singer's most successful efforts and long-time sellers for the company. Dalhart was interviewed in the Edison Amberola Monthly for December, 1918, about the dialect he used here and was to use in hundreds of other recordings for this and other labels:

I never had to learn it. When you are born and brought up in the South your only trouble is to talk any other way. All through my childhood that was almost the only talk I ever heard because the sure 'nough Southerner talks almost like a Negro, even when he's white. I've broken myself of the habit, more or less, in ordinary conversation, but it still comes pretty easy.

Or as the biographical sketch appearing in the Victor catalogs, 1920 through 1924, put it: "There is no burlesquing in Mr. Dalhart's singing of Negro songs. To quote his own words, he simply imagines he's 'back home' again and sings as the spirit and his home experiences dictate." But many of the first songs Dalhart cut for Edison were dictated, not by his Texas background, but by the company's belief in his being "one of the best light opera tenors in America." Among the arias he would record, were "On Yonder Rock Reclining" from Auber's Fra Diavolo and "We Strongly Now Will Try Together" from La Fille de Madame Angot.

Edison would continue to issue and reissue his recordings--mostly country after 1924--on cylinder and disc until its demise in 1929. In addition the company sponsored many "Tone-testing" tours for Dalhart throughout the nation. The singer, standing beside an Edison Diamond Disc console phonograph, would listen with a music store audience as one of his recordings played. Then he would sing the same number to the accompaniment of live musicians, supposedly proving the lifelike quality of the company's system of sound reproduction. These tours were adver-

tised widely and contributed to building Dalhart's reputation as an Edison artist. Often in conjunction with these promotional appearances, Dalhart's agents would book him for concerts which would run the gamut from music hall one-nighters to guest soloist appearances with oratorio societies. Adelyne Hood, soprano and fiddler on Dalhart recordings and personal appearances beginning in 1927, had joined him as early as 1917 as his partner on the Edison Tone-testing Tours.

However, it appears that Columbia Records not Edison, was the first important label to issue a Dalhart release. "Just a Word of Sympathy" was the Dalhart side of Columbia 2108 announced in Columbia's catalog for December 1916. Jim Walsh notes the record did not market well and was deleted from the 1919 catalog. However, the singer went on to record popular fox trots and World War I patriotic pieces--"Paul Revere (Won't You Ride for Us Again?)"--and later a spate of "Mammy" and Hawaiian specialty songs for Columbia through 1924. Already on both Edison and Columbia, the first of what would prove to be more than one hundred additional pseudonyms had appeared: Robert White, the name Dalhart had chosen under which to record comedy songs ("Stingo Stungo," Edison; "When Alexander Takes His Ragtime Band to France," Columbia).

Before Vernon Dalhart recorded "The Wreck of the Old '97" (his first version for Edison Recording Laboratories, May 1924, Edison #51361), there had been attempts at marketing country recordings by Henry Whitter, Riley Puckett, Kelly Harrell and a handful of other then obscure performers. Already instrumentalists like Fiddlin' John Carson had cut dance pieces. Some had even sung a few stanzas or had thrown in a vocal chorus. However, their recordings had been of little more than regional interest before Dalhart turned his recording career to a concentration upon country music. Before he stepped before an accoustical recording horn at Thomas A. Edison, Inc., there had been no country music recording of national importance and no country singer of the stature to launch a hit.

Dalhart's long association with Victor Talking Machine Co., the giant in record sales in the teens of this century, began when he cut his first session for the company in 1918. His first Victor side, "The Pickaninny's Paradise" (No. 18512), went on sale in February 1919. Succeeding releases through 1923 leaned heavily toward specialties marketed then as "coon songs," again capitalizing on Dalhart's flair for black dialect. Then from the company's 14 December 1923 announcement of his refrain on the foxtrot, "Stavin' Change," until the now historic November 1924 release, Dalhart had no new recording on Victor.

There are a number of conflicting stories concerning Dalhart's Victor debut as a country singer. In an interview with Jim Walsh in 1952, former Victor Musical Director Nathaniel Shilkret claimed that Dalhart's fortunes as a pop singer in 1924 were on the decline with the company. The singer, intent upon cutting a hit to shore up his Victor sales, begged to record "The Wreck of The Old '97," referring, of course, to his continuing hit with the song on Edison. The company pled hard times for its reluctance to experiment and pointed to Dalhart's lack of a "B" side for a country disc. When the singer presented as a song "some pencilled notes but no music," Shilkret said, "I told him it couldn't be used as it stood, but that I thought it might be fixed up to do." The manuscript which Dalhart said his cousin Guy Massey had written went home with the recording manager. "I wrote more verses and ground out a simple, mournful tune to fit the words. When I submitted the finished result to Dalhart, he was well pleased. But, neither then nor when the record became the biggest seller ever made up to that time did he offer to give me as much as a cigar." Shilkret remembered Dalhart's saying no royalties would have to be paid publishers and composers on either "The Wreck of The Old '97" or "The Prisoner's Song" since the first, as Dalhart is alleged to have said, was "in the public domain and the other was mostly written by the company's musical director." Shilkret avowed further that the latter song as Dalhart submitted it was "not worth recording. . . . Dalhart himself had nothing to do with writing it. There would have been no 'Prisoner's Song' record if it had not been for my altering, editing, and adding to the manuscript."

Dalhart cut "Prisoner's Song" masters at least eighteen times, and it appeared on over sixty labels, while many other artists covered the hit for the same companies. Dalhart was compelled by a two-year "Prisoner's Song" vogue to record the refrain for a number of waltz versions. The hit could not be contained by continental North America but sold throughout the English-speaking world with U.S. matricies of Dalhart sessions stamping out discs in Australia, New Zealand, the British Isles, India and portions of the Orient. The hit abounded in "answer songs" recorded by other artists, and Dalhart himself followed up with cuts of sequels such as "The Convict and the Rose" and "Guy Massey's Farewell," written by Massey's brother Bob (another Dalhart pseudonym).

Spiraling sales of "The Wreck of the Old '97" caused more than fifty persons to claim its authorship. Between 1930 and 1939 a suit over title to the song's copyright reached the United States Supreme Court twice. Although oral versions of the 27 September 1903 wreck of the Southern Railroad's crack mail train had been in circulation almost since its engineer, Joseph A. Broady, and twelve others died in the accident, it

was not until Dalhart's recording success with the ballad that claimants began to pester Victor, the company reaping the lion's share of the song's profits. If authorship of the song's words was a question, the source of its melody is immediately obvious. The tune is patently that of Henry C. Work's "The Ship That Never Returned" (1865). Dalhart learned the railroad folksong from Henry Whitter's 1923 recording (Okeh 40015). Dalhart's mispronunciation of "air-brakes" as "average" was aped by David George in his futile lawsuit to prove that he was the song's composer, not its plagiarist.

While "The Wreck of The Old '97" is more notorious because of the long, bitter litigation over its disputed authorship, it is less important to Dalhart's career and the establishment of commercial country music than "The Prisoner's Song." As Sigmund Spaeth observed, "To the surprise of everyone concerned, it was 'The Prisoner's Song' that sold the record, carrying its distribution to fantastic figures."

The question of who penned the largest vocal hit up to that time in recording history has been less public but only slightly less bitter. Dalhart at first claimed "The Prisoner's Song" was written by his cousin, Guy Massey. In fact Dalhart had the song copyrighted in Massey's name in the fall of 1924. But only a little over four years before his death, the singer told a Bridgeport (Connecticut) Post interviewer that he and Massey took a break from his Victor session (13 July 1924) and retreated to his nearby hotel room, where in the columnist's words "Massey wrote the words and Dalhart churned out the music just to fill space." The song, thus a-borning, was "written in a few hours on hotel stationery."

However, a few years earlier Dalhart had declared in a nationally aired radio broadcast that he was the song's only writer. In an undated letter to Jim Walsh, Carson Robinson, the most important of Dalhart's collaborators (1924-28), recalled this incident and other details of the song's interesting history:

Guy Massey... sang the song continually while he was visiting Dalhart in New York and when Dal and I were called by Victor to record "Wreck of the Old '97," Mr. Eddie King of Victor asked us if he had anything to put on the back of it. Dal told him about "The Prisoner's Song," which at that time was not even named, and told Mr. King there would be no royalty, as the song was public domain, as far as he knew. We recorded it and shortly afterwards Dal copyrighted the song in his name and stuck Victor for royalties. As far as I can learn, he collected from Shapiro-Bernstein approximately \$85,000 which represented 95 per cent of all royalties. Guy Massey got five

per cent and died... a few years later practically penniless. In later years when Dal was doing everything he could to get back on records, he was guest star on "We, the People," and I cringed when I heard him tell how he went home one night and composed "The Prisoner's Song." The man never composed a note of anything in his life....

Robison, a 1970 nominee for the Country Music Hall of Fame and gifted composer of the lion's share of Dalhart's sentimental, novelty and topical hit songs, was asked so often about "The Prisoner's Song" genesis that he prepared a statement for inquirers:

In 1924 I was under contract to RCA as a guitar player and about the end of July or the beginning of August, 1924, was called in to meet Mr. Vernon Dalhart, whose real name is Marion Try Slaughter, for the purpose of recording the "Wreck of Old 97." (sic) At that time, as I recall, the question arose as to what might be appropriate backing for this number and Dalhart said he had a number that his cousin Guy Massey had been singing at his home. As I recall, Mr. Edward King asked Mr. Dalhart what the title of the song was, and he said that as far as he knew it had no title, but was in regard to a man who was in prison. A few days later, we were called in to record "Wreck of 97" [sic] and at that time we were asked by Mr. King if we were willing to record the number which was later called "Prisoner's Song." On the basis that if the committee in Camden, New Jersey, accepted the recording we would be paid regular recording fees. It was accepted and later the recording was released 3 October 1924.

The story in connection with the writing of the "Prisoner's Song" as told to me by Vernon Dalhart is that one of Guy Massey's brothers was in the penitentiary. The brother passed the song on to Guy Massey who in turn sang the song in Mr. Dalhart's home in Mamaroneck, New York, where he (Massey) was living temporarily. As far as I know, and from what Mr. Dalhart told, Guy Massey had nothing to do whatever with the composition of the song, nor Dalhart, it was merely a song, as I said before, which was heard in the penitentiary. I was associated with Dalhart for four years 1924-28 and during that time I know that Dalhart never wrote or composed any sort of music or words....

As far as Guy Massey was concerned, I know of no other song that he wrote at all, although his name appeared on a publication of Shapiro-Bernstein called "Aincha Comin' Out Tonight," which was actually an adaptation of the folk song "Buffalo Gal" and as

I recall, I wrote the words myself and used the original folk music. The title "Aincha Comin' Out Tonight" as I recall, and I'm sure I'm right, was suggested by Elliott Shapiro of Shapiro-Bernstein.

It is my recollection that Elliott Shapiro told me that Guy Massey received 5% of the writers' royalties on the "Prisoner's Song" and that Vernon Dalhart got the other 95%.

Not only in this instance but in many others I was told so many conflicting stories by Vernon Dalhart that it was difficult to know what was right.

Dalhart continued to answer equivocally when Jim Walsh inquired about the origin of "The Prisoner's Song" (see Walsh's indispensable eight-part series on Dalhart in Hobbies (May-December 1960). In an undated letter from the 1940s, Dalhart wrote cryptically to Walsh:

For your information, "The Old 97" sales were nothing to compare (according to statistics) with "The Prisoner's Song." However, "The Old 97" was the cause of "The Prisoner's Song" in that I needed a tie-up, and I had "The Prisoner's Song" up my sleeve...."

Indeed it seems to have been the ace Dalhart needed.

The late New York Herald Tribune's Dalhart death notice (September 17, 1948) singled out "The Prisoner's Song" as a song that "made history... being sung and wailed in speakeasies, fraternity houses, and theaters all over the country..." selling "225,000 copies in four months and... still being sold." Of the song's writer or writers, the Tribune commented:

Its origin is lost in a confusion of stories, several versions contributed by Mr. Dalhart him-self. Sometimes he claimed authorship. More often he credited the song to his cousin, Guy Massey, a wandering singer with a tragic life who died at 27, just as his song was becoming famous. Mr. Massey's name is listed as author in the published version. Both the tune and the theme, however, appear in the folk music of Tennessee and Kentucky and in old cowboy and prison songs. A consensus of authorities is that Mr. Massey picked these up in his travels and combined them in a song which Mr. Dalhart edited into its final version.

On 2 February 1969, Bobby Gregory told me in an interview at his home in Nashville, Tennessee:

Dalhart wrote that ("The Prisoner's Song") himself, but he put his cousin's name, (Guy Massey's name) on it, and Guy died a short time after that. So it became a tremendous big thing and earned a fortune in royalties and those fellows that weren't in on it, you know, were probably wishing, "Why didn't I squeeze in on it?"....

Dalhart--I was in the office before he went down to Dallas to take care of the funeral arrangements and everything for Massey. He paid all of that out of his own pocket... hospital bills and funeral expenses.

After the song got so big, a lot of the chisellers, the sharpshooters, tried to get in on it. They said, "I helped him, I did this, I did that," and they didn't do anything.

Here's the way Dalhart explained it to me: They had cut "The Wreck of the Old 97" in the Victor studios on Twenty-fourth Street there in New York and two or three other sides. He needed a backside for the third song. The musicians had gone to lunch to a couple of places there on Third Avenue....

While the musicians were out to lunch, Dalhart scribbled down the words to "The Prisoner's Song," and the song was taken from an old P. D. called "Meet Me in the Moonlight." The melody, if you get that song, "Meet Me in the Moonlight," and you look at the words and the music, you'll see they're very similar. Dalhart straightened it out, and he put the thing in lines so it told a story like I told you before. Before, there were a lot of lines in there: "Meet Me in the Moonlight," but you didn't know why and so-forth. But Dalhart made it into "The Prisoner's Song."... So when the musicians came back from lunch, they went into it. He ran over it two or three times and they sat down and they cut it, and the thing just come out perfect, you know, unusually good. Just balanced--perfect. And so, there is others later on tried to say, "Oh, I helped him with that; I threw him this idea and I did this and I did that." There was nobody around....

He was in there figuring this, how he was going to do it, you know; when they come back and he straightened the story out and it made sense, like I was telling you and when he cut it, why it was just a little gem. Dalhart went and he copyrighted this when he came out of the studio. He copyrighted it, even though he put his cousin's name on there, and later he placed it with Shapiro, Bernstein.

They took care of him from there on. But he was nobody's fool. Even those guys that thought they were smart alecks, they didn't put anything over on Dalhart. He was a

clear-thinking guy, and he was fair-minded and he would give you a fair shake on any business dealings you had with him.

It is a fact that after Massey's death in 1926 the singer assumed total ownership of "The Prisoner's Song" copyright and drew its royalties until his own death 15 September 1948.

The Pathfinder magazine reported that "Guy S. Massey, 27-year-old sailor-minstrel and ballad writer... on his deathbed claimed the words as his own." A number of the magazine's readers objected to Massey's being credited with even the writing of the words. The magazine conceded lamely, "Apparently the song was written years ago and made popular by the sailor-minstrel."

(To be continued)

Columbia "New Process" Records
REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

VERNON DALHART

THIS famous Southern tenor is known both South and North, and his long list of records proves his great popularity. Vernon Dalhart, who comes from Texas, was nothing short of a sensation when he made his New York debut at its famous Hippodrome. Dalhart was one of the first to carry Southern tunes North, and now devotes his whole time to them. If you don't know him yet, either via the air or Columbia *New Process Records*, ask your dealer to play for you one of his records listed below.



VERNON DALHART

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| THE OLD KITTY KATE (ON THE MISSISSIPPI LINE) | } 15440-D |
| GOING DOWN TO NEW ORLEANS—Vocals—Novelty Accomps. | |
| RAZOR'S IN DE AIR—Vocal Duet—Novelty Accomp. (Adelyne Hood and Vernon Dalhart) | } 15417-D |
| DIXIE WAY—Vocal—Novelty Accomp. | |
| POOR OLD MARE | } 15405-D |
| AIN'T GONNA GRIEVE MY MIND — Vocals — Novelty Accomps. | |
| THE ALABAMA FLOOD | } 15386-D |
| ROLL ON RIVER—Vocals—Novelty Accomps. | |
| WRECK OF THE N. & W. CANNON BALL—Novelty Accomp. | } 15378-D |
| LOW BRIDGE EVERYBODY DOWN—Vocals—Jew's-Harp, Banjo and Piano Accomp. | |
| VIVA-TONAL RECORDING. THE RECORDS WITHOUT SCRATCH | |
| [21] | |

Above: A page from a 1929
Columbia Old Time Tunes Catalog

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FIDDLING IN NORTH AMERICA, PART I

Compiled and Annotated by Michael Mendelson

Beginning with this issue of the Quarterly, I am going to be publishing a complete annotated bibliography of fiddling in North America. Using A Bibliography of Fiddling, Fiddle Tunes, and Related Dance Music in North America: Including Representative Materials from the British Isles and Scandinavia, compiled by Joseph C. Hickerson and Maggie Holtzberg (Library of Congress, Archive of Folk Song, 1974), as a starting point, additions and corrections will be made, and annotations added to the entries. The work will proceed alphabetically, with the new data being worked in as they become available.

Materials to be included are books, pamphlets, scholarly articles, record liner notes, newspaper and magazine articles, etc., that concern themselves with fiddling, fiddlers, fiddle tunes, and related dance music. The main emphasis of the bibliography will be on North America (including not only the Anglo-American, but also the Afro-American, jazz, Scandinavian-American, and other traditions found there) but all related material will be listed if it is available.

Annotations to the entries will be short, and meant only to give an indication of the content of the item. Entries with self-descriptive titles may appear with no further annotation. Upon completion of the basic bibliography, a cross index of the entries will be compiled. An asterisk(*) indicates the item is in the JEMF archives; a cross (+) indicates the entry has been seen and confirmed.

It is hoped that readers of JEMFQ will help with this project by informing me of additions and corrections. I will be systematically going through the JEMF files and periodical collection, but will obviously not have access to everything available on fiddling. Newspapers and general interest magazines in particular are difficult to deal with because of the enormous volume of print and the low yield of relevant material. Local publications and small private printings often contain valuable information that is relatively inaccessible. The help of JEMFQ readers in filling in the gaps would be greatly appreciated.

The style will basically follow the bibliographical format of A Manual of Style (12th ed., rev. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969) with the addition of complete publication information for periodicals (e.g., volume and number, along with the month of publication). Title, author, date and place of publication, publisher, name of periodical, and page numbers will be included when known. Frequently cited periodicals will be abbreviated according to the scheme given in Section 5. The entries below will serve as examples. Readers sending additional data should, if possible, include a xerox copy of the material cited in addition to all the above data; this would be of immense help in annotating. If this is not possible, a description of the content of the item will help. All correspondence should be addressed c/o the JEMF.

The bibliography will be divided into five sections:

I. MAIN ENTRIES

- a) Under this heading will be included books, tune collections, articles, pamphlets, etc., that contain substantial amounts of useful information. Although this will require some subjective decisions on my part, I feel it would be best to place ephemeral materials such as poems, impressions of fiddling contests, and the like, in a separate section. Folkloric materials about fiddling (legends, superstitions, etc.) will generally be found under main entries.
- b) Entries obtained from a single source, such as an entire run of a given periodical, will be printed as a unit. Single entries will be worked in alphabetically, either as that section of the listing is published, or later in additions and corrections.

II. RECORD LINER NOTES

Notes on record liners, booklets and other material accompanying phonograph records will be listed if they contain useful information.

III. EPHEMERAL MATERIALS

Under this heading will be included items not listed above, such as short newspaper and magazine articles, festival and contest programs, poems, impressions, etc.

IV. ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

As the bibliography proceeds, additions and corrections to previous listings will be included.

V. CHECKLIST OF SOURCES

This list will include those periodicals the complete runs of which have been searched, and other sources that have been searched for relevant material.

These five sections will be running concurrently.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE COUNTRY MUSIC ENCYCLOPEDIA, by Melvin Shestack (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1974), 410 pp., photographs, discography, \$12.95.

A glowing review for this book could be done only, perhaps, for the publisher's corporate shareholders. In that context a reviewer could discuss the book's likely contribution to corporate profits from expected mass sales to the impulse-buying fans of country music. With heavy backing from the widely distributed Country Music Magazine, good sales for the \$12.95 book should be no problem. [Note: In recent ads for the book, the price is given as \$13.95.]

Unfortunately, reviewing "The Country Music Encyclopedia" in a positive vein elsewhere becomes difficult. "Encyclopedia" as a descriptive title in this instance is stretching the definition of the word. For one thing, the book relies heavily upon the reprinting of articles or passages from other publications ranging from fan magazines to Bill Malone's book, Country Music U.S.A. Also, where the author pens his own words he often resorts to writing first-person accounts and personal opinions.

With a quick scanning of the book, one can readily ascertain the author's and publisher's prime objective: generate the book quickly and at minimal cost. To accomplish this meant maximizing the gathering of others' materials and minimizing the author's writing and raw research. Thus the front cover's claim of the book being "the most thorough, innovative, and ambitious book ever written on country music" is grossly overstated, since the author did more gathering than writing. For example, the 17-page listing of "Country Radio Stations" was furnished by the Country Music Association. Likewise, the 50-page discographic section of albums available at the time of writing could easily have been copied from Phonolog or other sources. This discography of "albums available" is in sharp contrast to the flyleaf's claim that the discography "includes every major hit of each performer." To achieve the latter would have required more time and effort to compile -- contrary to the prime objective.

Subject headings for the book are largely artist-oriented with the stated criteria for inclusion being record popularity charts in Billboard and Cashbox magazines. However, some pre-popularity-chart performers are justifiably included such as Jimmie Rodgers, The Carter Family, Buell Kazee and others. Other important old-timers, on the other hand, are excluded, such as Milton Brown, Blue Sky Boys, Bill Boyd, Gid Tanner, Charlie Poole, Ted Daffan and others. Some hit-chart performers are also excluded, such as Warner Mack, Johnny Darrell, Bonnie Guitar, and Johnny & Joanie Mosby.

The space devoted to each artist's bio seems to have depended largely upon the length of the articles or passages to which the author had access, as opposed to the importance of the artist in country music's history. Hall of Famer, Jimmie Davis, for example, rates one column, including photograph, while the next in line, Mac Davis, gets over five columns of space. Apparently, no article worthy of reprint could be found about Jimmie Davis, so the author penned a few words. On the other hand, the author did find a lengthy article by Jay Ehler about Mac Davis, from which he borrows generously. Overall, the shorter biographical sketches are written by the author while the longer inclusions are reprints of others' works. One exception is the 4-page writing on Hank Williams at one of his shows in the late '40s, but rumor has it that his story is a complete fabrication. It may well be. At one point reference is made to Hank delighting the audience with "Why Don't You Love Me" and "Howling At The Moon" which are from 1950 and 1951 respectively. Yet it's also stated that Hank had not yet recorded "Lovesick Blues," which was a 1949 hit for him.

Anyone reading the book who is concerned with accuracy of script should think twice. Leon Payne is no longer living in San Antonio as the book states; he died there in 1969. Stringbean did not die in Kentucky; it was in Tennessee. Red Foley's bio incorrectly states he was the first to help Charley Pride on the road to stardom, while Pride's bio correctly indicates it was Red Sovine. And on and on.

At this point in time it would seem that enough "encyclopedias" on country music have been written until such time that an existing one can be revised and expanded or that a new one can be written and compiled by someone more dedicated to the end product than to the pursuit of the fast buck, as is the case here.

-- Bob Pinson
Country Music Foundation
Nashville, Tennessee

THE AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC DISCOGRAPHY. VOL 3. THE COLUMBIA 1-D SERIES: 1923-1929. A DISCOGRAPHY OF POPULAR MUSIC ISSUED ON COLUMBIA RECORDS NUMBERS 1*D to 2061-D WITH AN APPENDIX OF 2062-D TO 2600-D, by Bill Randle (Bowling Green Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1974) 411 pp., illustrations, index; \$25.00

Bill Randle is known to discographers as one of those far-sighted men who had the good sense to get into the old Columbia files back in the early 1960s and to make copies of what he found there. It's a good thing he did, since some of the data that existed then apparently no longer exists, and Columbia's attitude toward researchers is not as stable as it was in the 1960s. The volume at hand represents the first in a series of volumes in which Randle plans to make this information public -- or at least as public as any \$25.00 book can be. At first glance the book would seem to be of interest primarily to record collectors, but a closer look reveals that there is a lot of useful raw data of interest to the more serious student of popular music, and especially of old-time music.

The book's involved 18th-century title explains some of the scope, but not all. The bulk of the book is taken up with a numerical listing of the pre-1929 Columbia popular series, using data drawn from the original coupling notice and assignment sheets in the Columbia files: we thus get, in addition to the customary release number, title, and master number, the original pressing order for the record, the release date, the names of the song's composers, the date the song was published, and the name of the music publisher. Recording dates, locations, and personnel are not included, being planned for some separate volume in the future. This batch of data is surrounded by a short introduction, a short and rather inadequate historical background, a roster of artists in the 1*D series, an index of titles in the series, an index to the music publishers, and an index showing (by release number) which publishers had which songs. One very interesting appendix shows facsimiles of the coupling notices, the artist recording history sheets, and some random correspondence; a less interesting appendix continues the numerical through 2600, but without the coupling sheet data. The whole book is in typescript and seems very well bound (I am told, by hand); it is big, heavy, and probably should be in most music reference libraries.

Most JEMFQ readers probably know that it was the 1-D popular Columbia series that released the first authentic old-time music. The popular series was initiated in 1923 and represented an effort on Columbia's part to make a comeback from the disastrous 1921-22 sales decline; by the middle of 1924 the series had issued its first old-time offerings by Gid Tanner and Riley Puckett. Thus until the initiation of the famed 15000-D series, the specialized old-time series designed for a specific market, in early 1925, the 1-D series carried what old-time releases Columbia saw fit to record. This book, then, gives us some interesting insights into the pre-history of old-time recordings on Columbia. It is especially revealing in regard to the way Columbia saw old-time records in relation to "mainstream" records. For instance, between June 1924 and January 1925, Columbia released 27 records by old-time artists -- out of a total of 258 releases: about 10%. In June, July, and August 1924 -- the first three months of old-time releases -- two old-time records were released each month. In the next two months, the releases of old-time music jumped to 6 and 8. Was the old-time product picking up sales, or was Columbia pushing it?

The Columbia artists were generally not of the caliber of other companies of this time, like Okeh or Vocalion. Ernest Thompson, a singer accompanied by his own guitar and harmonica, accounted for ten of the first twenty-seven releases; Puckett and Tanner, later to become the nucleus of the Skillet Lickers, the most successful string band on the 15000-D series, accounted for nine of the releases. The fiddle-banjo team of Eva Davis and Samatha Baumgarner, from Asheville, N. C., accounted for five releases; "Stove Pipe No. 1" (black hillbilly singer Sam Jones) accounted for two more, and the ubiquitous Vernon Dalhart a final two. With the exceptions of Puckett-Tanner and Dalhart, none of these first old-time Columbia artists really went on to make any substantial further contribution to old-time music on records.

One can also detect some interesting patterns in the pressing orders given here. These pressing orders do not necessarily reflect sales figures; they represent the informed guesses of company officials as to how many copies of each release may be sold. Later, when the 15000-D series was established and a distributing system set up throughout the South, the company had dealer response and perhaps even advance orders to guide them in determining the size of the initial pressing order (cf. the Vocalion 1927 dealers' order blank reproduced in JEMFQ #30). It is not at all clear what relationship there was between the pressing orders and actual sales figures. Sales figures given in an appendix to Richard Sudhalter and Philip R. Evans' Bix. Man and Legend (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1974) for some of Whiteman's records show a rather close correlation to the pressing orders Randle gives. However, a few random comparisons of some titles in the later 15000-D series shows quite a difference between some pressing orders and sales. For instance, Columbia 15201 ("A Corn Licker Still In Georgia Part 1/Part 2") was pressed initially at 17,400 and had sales of over 250,000. Obviously, pressing orders were generally lower than sales; how much lower depended on the artist and the song. However, for the old time releases in the Columbia 1-D series, the company had not yet developed any efficient "feedback" system for old-time releases, and their initial pressing orders probably tell us more about the company's attitude to the then-new old time music product than they do actual sales. With this in mind, we can turn to some of Randle's pressing orders for the old time music in the 1-D series.

The Columbia coupling sheets did not start giving the pressing orders until September 1924, so we have no figures for the first Puckett-Tanner records. But by October 1924 we have a full set of production figures. This month saw a total of 20 releases (mainstream and old time), with pressing orders ranging from a high of 15,000 (Columbia 218-D, the California Ramblers) to a low of 5,000 (Columbia 216-D, Ernest Thompson's tenth release in the series since August 1924). The average pressing for the month was 10,250. (To be sure, there were four old time releases, 166-169-D, which were released in October 1924 for which, inexplicably, there are no pressing orders; thus these figures apply only to the releases for which we have pressing orders, both popular and traditional.) It may be significant that the pressing orders for the four documented old time releases of the month all fell below this average: 206-D (Thompson): 8,000; 210-D (Stove Pipe No. 1): 9,000; 216-D (Thompson): 5,000; and 220-D (Puckett): 9,000. Though the number of old time releases accounted for 20% of the total, their pressing orders accounted for only 15% of the combined pressing orders. Indications: at this date, at least, the old time entries were not pulling their weight, and the Columbia executives were producing them with a certain amount of caution. By December 1924, on the eve of the inauguration of the 15000-D series, the pressing orders were averaging 8,805; the three documented old time entries ran to 7,000 (245-D, Tanner-Puckett), 7,000 (254-D, Tanner-Puckett), and 8,000 (Dalhart). The highest December pressing orders came from two Ted Lewis records, which ran to 20,000 copies. So the old time entries were improving slightly in regard to mainstream pressing orders. This is rather inconclusive evidence, but when combined with similar studies of the 15000-D series itself (in comparison with the mainstream 1-D series) this sort of evidence might yield some much needed demographics for old-time music recordings.

One can only extrapolate so much from Randle's raw data; had sales figures (as opposed to pressing orders) been available for inclusion in the book, it would have been a gold mine indeed. There is also the curious fact that the book stops at 2600 in the series, whereas the D series ran up to 3176. This breaking off point makes no sense to me, unless some of Randle's data broke off at this point. Whatever the case, a word of explanation would have been in order.

As is, though, the book can be of immense use to students of American popular music if it is used carefully. Even if one chooses to treat pressing orders with a large grain of salt, which at this point in research is probably the prudent thing to do, Randle's book has a lot of information about publishers, composers, and release dates. Randle's introduction seems to direct the book toward the record collector, but it is deserving of a wider audience than that. Even people who have little aesthetic regard for the 1-D series can gain a great deal of insight into the history of the recording industry and the development of popular music in America. And for the old time buff, the book provides a fascinating preface to the revered 15000-D series. May Randle's facts continue to pour forth in the future volumes he promises.

-- Charles Wolfe
Middle Tennessee State University

THE COMPLETE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF POPULAR MUSIC AND JAZZ: 1900-1950, by Roger D. Kinkle (New Rochelle, New York: Arlington House, 1974), xi + 2643 pp. in 4 Vols., \$ 75.00.

The dust jacket hails this set as the "definitive data bank on American popular music and jazz," and indeed no other reference work covers the period in question so thoroughly. Introductory matter in the first volume outlines the plan of the work, gives abbreviations used, and presents a 12-page historical overview of jazz and pop music of the first half of the century. The remainder of the volume (pp. 1-476) consists of a year-by-year listing of noteworthy popular songs, Broadway and movie musicals (with cast, credits, and music used), and representative recordings, arranged (within the year category) alphabetically by artist. Vols. 2 and 3 (pp. 477-2000) consists of 2105 biographies of singers, composers, bandleaders, actors, musicians, and arrangers. Short biographical sketches are supplemented, where appropriate, with lists of representative recordings, songs, musicals, etc. All figures who emerged during the period 1900-1950 are covered; in cases where their careers continued later, the coverage continues up through early 1974. The fourth volume includes Downbeat and Metronome poll winners; a time chart of release dates for 19 major record labels from the period 1924-1945; complete Academy Award winners and nominees for music, 1934-1972; complete numerical listings of many of the principal pop record labels from the mid-1920s through the early 1940s (Victor 20000-21000-22000-24000-25000-26000-27000; Bluebird 5000-6000-7000-10000-11000; OKeh 40000-41000; Columbia 1-D--3176-D, 35000-36000; Brunswick 4000-6000-7000; Decca 100-4455; Melotone 12000-13000-35000-50000-60000-70000; Perfect 15000-16000; Vocalion 1000-1745, 15855-899, 25001-21, 2522-6747)--some 33,000 records; and index of personal names; indexes of Broadway and movie musicals; and a popular song index (28161 titles) to all songs mentioned in the first three volumes.

As the above lengthy description indicates, this is an immensely useful set of volumes, gathering as it does into one place more information on the music of 1900-1950 than any comparable four books. Needless to say, however, no such work can be described as "definitive" or "complete," though the magnitude of the work should not be minimized. For example, the year-by-year song title listing can be compared with Nat Shapiro's set of volumes, Popular Music, which are similarly arranged. A comparison of entries for the year 1920 indicates about 50 song titles common to both books, about 10 that appear in Kinkle's and not in Shapiro's, and about 70 that appear in Shapiro's and not in Kinkle's. The discographies for the artists are of necessity selective (about 150 78 rpm recordings by Bing Crosby out of over 600; some 30 records by Vernon Dalhart out of well over 1000), but a carefully chosen discography can serve purposes that a full listing cannot.

Hillbilly and country music fans will find many names of interest in vols. 2 and 3 (Acuff, Autry, Carter, Daffan, Dexter, Hamblen, Kincaid, Luther, Macon, McMichen, Monroe, Puckett, Robison, Sons of the Pioneers, Snow, Travis, Tubb, Williams, and Wills among them), as will blues enthusiasts (Broonzy, Cox, Jefferson, Rainey, Smith, etc.), but these genres are not the principal subjects of interest.

In short, the set will not put an end to any other reference works in the making or planning, but it can scarcely be overlooked by any music historian, the high price notwithstanding. (It was originally available as a selection from the Nostalgia Book Club at about half the list price.) Furthermore, it now supersedes the numerous mimeographed checklists and numericals that Kinkle has been providing collectors with for many years.

-- Norm Cohen

SANG BRANCH SETTLERS: Folksongs and Tales of a Kentucky Mountain Family, by Leonard Roberts (Austin & London: Published for the American Folklore Society [#61, Memoir Series] by the University of Texas Press, 1974), xxi + 401 pp, \$12.50.

Professor Roberts, of Pikeville College in Pikeville, Kentucky, has published several collections of collectanea from his own fieldwork in his native Kentucky. This volume offers 161 folksongs and tales collected from a single family, the Couches, from the rural mountain region of Eastern Kentucky. The volume includes Notes, Bibliography, and an Index. The 100 songs include mostly traditional songs that have appeared frequently in other collections--which is by no means to diminish the significance of the present collection. In several instances, Roberts' identifying notes can be augmented. #21, "Those Brown Eyes," is the 1930s hillbilly standard, "Those Blue Eyes I Love So Well." #26, is identified as "Ellen Smith" on the basis of the first stanza; most of the other 7 stanzas, however, are all from other songs--in particular, "The Cruel War is Raging." #27, "Mines of Coal

Creek," is only in part that song; half of it is "The House Carpenter." #48, "Praise the Lord, I Saw the Light," is the Hank Williams hit. And #53, "Back in the Hills," is identified as a relative of "Hills of Roane County," but is none other than Roy Acuff's "Precious Jewel." The occurrence of such pieces as the last two are good evidence of the continuing vitality of the hillbilly/country tradition, and its continuing interaction with the uncommercial folk tradition.

-- N. C.

FOLK SONGS AND SINGING GAMES OF THE ILLINOIS OZARKS by David S. McIntosh, edited by Dale R. Whiteside. (Carbondale & Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974). ix + 119 pp, with 7" ep containing 9 short songs, \$9.95.

These songs and games were collected by Prof. McIntosh and his wife in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, in the mountain counties of southern Illinois, and edited for publication from their collection by Whiteside. The section on songs is divided into two chapters: songs of local significance, referring to songs that originated in the Illinois Ozarks or "have become attached to some particular locality in this region" (Introduction), and Traditional Folk Songs, meaning pieces "that came into the Illinois Ozarks as part of the folk heritage of the early settlers: (Intro.). Unfortunately, these two categories are not mutually exclusive. In this collection, several songs classed as "local" probably should not have been. For example, "Across the Plains of Illinois" (p. 17) is the British import, "The Girl I Left Behind Me;" "Jackson County Jail" (p. 23) is widely known, better under the title "Logan (Dallas) County Jail." "Illinois Gals" (p. 25) appears elsewhere under different titles, such as "Come All You Virginia Gals," or "Come All You Missouri Gals," and can be traced to a minstrel song, "Free Nigger," published in 1841. And "Turnip Greens" (p. 26) is also a minstrel song found in both black and white tradition throughout the south. The justification for its inclusion in the section of local songs is the reference to the town Salem (Illinois) in the lyrics. The several election campaign songs from the late 19th century are likewise of wider provenance than southern Illinois, and can hardly be said to have originated there. On the other hand, a few genuinely are local products: "Alan Bane," from an 1866 murder; "The Flood of Shawneetown", from 1898; and "The Wreck at Maud," from a 1905 trainwreck. For the last two mentioned pieces only one stanza (with the music) is given, and I wonder whether others were unintentionally omitted.

-- N. C.

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Old Time Music, #17 (Summer 1975) has features on Lonnie Austin and Norman Woodlieff, by Janet Kerr, with excerpts from Austin's diary of 1928-29 (pp 7-10); H. M. Barnes' Blue Ridge Ramblers, with discography, by Tony Russell (p 11); and Walter Smith, with discography, by Tony Russell (pp 12-17); the latter a survey of the material Smith recorded. John Stoten continues his survey of Old Time Music in India with the next installment in the Twin FT8000 numerical.

North Carolina Folklore Journal, 23:3 (Aug. 1975) includes "The Tragic Ballad of Miss Emma Hartsell," by Jan A. Herlocker (pp 82-88), an account of a Cabarrus County murder/lynching of 1898, with a text of the ballad about the event.

Popular Music & Society, IV:1 (1975) includes "Sound Recording Popularity Charts: A Useful Tool for Music Research. I. Why and How they are Compiled," By Peter Hesbacher, Robert Downing, and David G. Berger (pp 3-18). The article contains a detailed description of how Billboard magazine arrives at the scoring on its weekly pop charts. The ratings are based on a complicated combination of sales figures from selected one-stops and retailers, and from radio station exposure on 63 stations. A total of 22 regional markets are involved.

Sing Out! 23:6 (Jan/Feb 1975) features "Ralph Stanley's Old Time Mountain Bluegrass," an interview with John Cohen (pp 2-6, 8), and ("The Roots of Reggae," by Andrew Kaslow (pp 12-13), on Jamaican music.

Memorial To Jimmie Rodgers, by Edward Allen Bishop (Marion, Miss.: House of Alohas, 1974); 40 pp., \$2.00. Biography of Jimmie Rodgers, with many photos, facsimiles.

JEMF REPRINT SERIES

Reprints 17-25, available bound as a set only, are \$1.00 to members of the *Friends of the JEMF* and \$2.00 to all others; all other reprints are 50¢ to members of the *Friends* and \$1.00 to others.

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- 17-25. Under the title "Commercially Disseminated Folk Music: Sources and Resources," the July 1971 issue of *Western Folklore* included 9 articles by D. K. Wilgus, Eugene Earle, Norm Cohen, Archie Green, Joseph Hickerson, Guthrie T. Meade, Jr., and Bill Malone. Available bound as a set only. (\$1.00 to *Friends*; \$2.00 to all others.)
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JEMF QUARTERLY

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Summer 1975

Number 38

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Members of the Friends of the JEMF receive the JEMF Quarterly as part of their \$7.50 (or more) annual membership dues. Individual subscriptions are \$7.50 per year for the current year; Library subscription rates are \$9.00 per year. Back issues of Volumes 6-10 (Numbers 17 through 36) are available at \$2.00 per copy. (Xerographic and microform copies of JEMFQ are available from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Mich.)

The JEMF Quarterly is edited by Norm Cohen. Manuscripts that fall within the area of the JEMF's activities and goals (see inside front cover) are invited, but should be accompanied by an addressed stamped return envelope. All manuscripts, books for review, and other communications should be addressed to: Editor, JEMFQ, John Edwards Memorial Foundation, at the Folklore & Mythology Center, University of California, Los Angeles, Ca., 90024.

JEMF QUARTERLY

JOHN EDWARDS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



VOL. XI, PART 3

AUTUMN 1975

No. 39

THE JEMF

The John Edwards Memorial Foundation is an archive and research center located in the Folklore and Mythology Center of the University of California at Los Angeles. It is chartered as an educational non-profit corporation, supported by gifts and contributions.

The purpose of the JEMF is to further the serious study and public recognition of those forms of American folk music disseminated by commercial media such as print, sound recordings, films, radio, and television. These forms include the music referred to as *cowboy, western, country & western, old time, hillbilly, bluegrass, mountain, country, cajun, sacred, gospel, race, blues, rhythm and blues, soul, and folk rock.*

The Foundation works toward this goal by:

gathering and cataloguing phonograph records, sheet music, song books, photographs, biographical and discographical information, and scholarly works, as well as related artifacts;

compiling, publishing, and distributing bibliographical, biographical, discographical, and historical data;

reprinting, with permission, pertinent articles originally appearing in books and journals;

and reissuing historically significant out-of-print sound recordings.

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CLAYTON McMICHEN: HIS LIFE AND MUSIC

By Norm Cohen

In the fifteen or so years of intensive rekindled interest in old time hillbilly and blues music, dozens of elderly musicians who made recordings in their youth during the 1920s and 1930s have been traced down, visited, interviewed, recorded, and then, perhaps, forgotten again. Our appetite for such rediscoveries seems to be insatiable; yet what of the many ethical questions posed by such activity? Sometimes, indeed, an old timer such as Clark Kessinger or Mississippi John Hurt is found who can slide back into the musical limelight gracefully and happily, enjoying a second career as a popular and successful performer. Other times a performer is encountered whose musical skills have diminished considerably with the passage in time; nevertheless, in a confusion of historical values with esthetic ones, he is urged to take to the college/festival circuit, perhaps frustrating himself as much as he disappoints his audiences. But more often we find a singer or musician who never was quite the success that he had wanted to be (indeed, most are not); to be sought out thirty or forty years later may suggest to him that at long last someone has recognized his long-hidden talents; that now, fortune will be his if only he manages himself a little more carefully and is not taken advantage of. Other times we find a performer whose musical career was a brief fling of his youth; perhaps an embarrassment to him now, and certainly nothing to rehash in dreary detail, picking out names and dates and facts from the cast-off detritus of an aging memory. Or, another possibility, the rediscovered artist turns out to be intensely hostile to the music business and his former associates, never able to forget the fact that the success he sought eluded him, and hardly in a mood to sentimentalize over old scars and wounds that time had failed to heal. Clayton "Pappy" McMichen fell into this last category.

McMichen was one of the major figures in hillbilly/country music in the 1920s and 1930s; fortunately, he was interviewed by several folklorists and country music historians in the twelve years before his death in 1970.¹ Nevertheless, whether because of the full and varied nature of his musical career or because of his reluctance to examine his memory carefully, we are still lacking many details such as key dates and personnel, and how certain important developments came to pass. John Edwards of Australia was one of the first country music historians to make contact with McMichen, in December 1957; Guthrie

Meade talked with him at about the same time. In July 1959, Fred Hoeptner and Bob Pinson visited Clayton at his home in Louisville, Kentucky, and taped a long interview, which has since been transcribed in Old Time Music.²

Clayton was born on 26 January 1900 in the tiny town of Allatoona, Georgia, northwest of Atlanta. His grandfather, who ran a store and the local post office, feuded with a Mr. Armstrong, who ran a country store. Once, Armstrong bought a Columbia cylinder machine, so Grandpa McMichen bought an Edison machine, which out-drew the customers and gave Grandpa all the town's business. Clayton recalls learning two songs from Edison cylinders as a boy: Arthur Collins' "All In Down and Out" [#9492, issued March 1907] and Ada Jones' "I Remember You" [#10103, April 1909].

At the age of eleven, "Mac" learned to fiddle from his uncles and from his father, a trained musician who played fiddle tunes at neighborhood square dances and Viennese waltzes at the uptown hotel society dances. In 1913 his family moved to Atlanta, and Mac became an automobile mechanic. Meanwhile, he would hang around Mays Badgett's fiddle repair shop during the First World War years, where classical violinists would drop in and give him lessons in technique. He was fourteen when he entered his first fiddle contest and won third place, a prize of \$50.

It was not long after that Mac put together his first band. He was firing an engine on the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad at the time, and used to play and sing with several fellow Atlantans. They called their group "The Hometown Boys," after a musical aggregation in the "Toonerville Trolley" cartoon strip. The personnel at that time are not known for certain, but probably included himself and Charles Whitten (fiddles), Mike Whitten and Boss Hawkins (guitars), and Ezra (Ted) Hawkins (mandolin). Other possible early members were Riley Puckett (guitar) and Lowe Stokes (fiddle).

The Hometown Boys made their radio debut on Atlanta's Station WSB on 18 September 1922, six months after the station opened and just nine days after Fiddlin' John Carson became the first rural musician to make a radio broadcast. The

following day's Atlanta Journal reported their success:

Introduced Monday as radio entertainers, the Hometown Boys' string band, presenting W. C. McMichen, first violin; Charles Whitten second violin; Miles Whitten, guitar; Ted Hawkins, mandolin, and Boss Hawkins, guitar, qualified as a combination of talent that appealed hugely to auditors both in and out of Atlanta.

The members of this informal organization have played together for years and even though unaccustomed to the wireless game, they made a tremendously impressive showing. Their numbers included "Dapper Dan," "Tuk [sic] Me to Sleep," "Ring's Waltz," "The Sunshine of Your Smile," and "Alabama Jubilee." They will return to WSB before long and will have a brand-new assortment of melodies."³

The Hometown Boys returned just two days later. And on the following Thursday, they brought Riley Puckett with them. The Atlanta Journal of 29 September wrote,

... Shortly after the 10:45 o'clock trans-continental concert opened, Dr. Sidney Walker, of Dublin, Ga., telephones to say he wanted the Home Town String Band to sing or play "Kentucky Home." He had just enjoyed "Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane," sung by Riley Puckett, tenor and guitarist, accompanied by W. C. McMichen, violinist; Ross [sic] Hawkins, guitarist, and Ted Hawkins, mandolinist. Dr. Walker soon heard the number he wanted...

On the Home-Town Boys' fine program were the "Old Cabin" song, a wonderful yodeling solo, by Riley Puckett; "Ring Waltz," "Sweet Bunch of Daisies," "St. Louis Blues," "Wabash Blues," and other hits. Already favorites at WSB, the Home-Town outfit scored a knockout by introducing Mr. Puckett as one of their stars Thursday night...⁴

The Journal continued to report on the successes of the Home Town Boys over WSB's nightly broadcasts. Other titles mentioned that they played on the 9 December show included "St Louis Blues," "Three O'Clock," "Lonesome Mama," and "Dixie." The selections offered on these early radio programs indicate that McMichen's band was not primarily interested in what we now call old-time music, but leaned heavily toward popular numbers of the day. This desire of Mac's to play contemporary music and not old-fashioned swamp opera nagged at his heels for decades, and was one of the roots of his continued dissatisfaction with hillbilly music and his role in the young industry.



Above: From Atlanta Journal (24 Sept 1922)-- "Charles Whitten, Miles Whitten and W.C.McMichen."

Below: From Columbia catalog, *Familiar Tunes, Old and New* (1929).



CLAYTON McMICHEN

Another clue to Mac's early discontent emerged during the 1921 Atlanta fiddlers' contest. Since about 1913, Georgia's principal city had staged a fiddlers' contest in the city auditorium that drew huge crowds and attracted considerable publicity. Evidently the city's fashionable set considered it quite chic to attend, although whether this was done in a mood of "slumming" or not is difficult to discern from contemporary accounts. Practically since the beginning, the contests were dominated by the incomparable showmen and performers, Fiddlin' John Carson and Gid Tanner. Carson won practically every year, and Tanner won in the years when Carson didn't. They were neither of them distinguished hoedown fiddlers, but both were excellent showmen and amused and delighted crowds at each performance. On 29 September, the Atlanta Journal reported:

On the eve of the opening of the 1921 old-time fiddlers' convention at the auditorium it is announced that a rival organization was formed on Wednesday night which purports to be the "real thing," and says the existing bunch of fiddlers will not be recognized by them as the "old-time fiddlers" of Georgia.

The new organization, numbering 20 members and headed by 'Bud' Silvey will not recognize the existing organization, according to a statement made by J. J. Owen, a member of the new body. "John Carson and 'Gid' Tanner can't hold a light to 'Bud' Silvey and 'Mac' McMichen," Mr. Owen stated Thursday morning. "Our crowd represents the real 'Old timey' fiddlers and we are going to put on a convention of our own in the near future which will outshine anything the other crowd can do."⁵

McMichen was Secretary of this new organization. We cannot determine what were the real reasons for the formation of this splinter group. To deny that Carson and Tanner were old-timey fiddlers, and that Mac was, does not square with the evidence. Perhaps the younger fiddlers thought the main body of fiddlers too old-fashioned for their taste, or--more likely--they realized that the regular conventions were practically sewn up in advance with Carson and Tanner almost guaranteed winners. Another complaint voiced in some of the press releases was that under the old convention rules, participants only get about \$2.50 a day; the splinter group promised to share profits equally among all members, though vowing to pay burial expenses and provide free funeral music for any member of their organization who should die. Whether anything ever came of this move to form a separate organization and hold rival conventions is not known to me. The regular organization, however, continued to hold annual conventions each autumn in Atlanta for many years.

A few years later another medium of entertainment opened up to the hillbilly musicians:

phonograph records. In March 1924, The Columbia Phonograph Co. brought Atlantans Gid Tanner and Riley Puckett to New York to make their first recordings--and Columbia's first in the hillbilly field.⁶ On the 7th of the following July, through circumstances that have not been made known, Clayton McMichen and his Home Town Band cut their first recordings for the rival Okeh Phonograph Corp. in Atlanta. The probable personnel at this time were Mac, fiddle; possibly Lowe Stokes, guitar; Bob Stevens, 5-string banjo; and Bob Stevens, Jr., clarinet.⁷ The Stevenses were from Lindale, Georgia; these were young Stevens' only recordings; he was killed in an auto accident on 25 August, while Mac was driving. Mac's recording career lasted fourteen years more, involving Okeh, Columbia, Crown, RCA Victor, and Decca. (A full discography is not given here; it is being prepared for publication in Old Time Music in the near future.) These first Okeh recordings did not do well; as Mac wrote John Edwards years later, "'Swget Bunch of Daisies' ... was strictly a Brody."⁸ As Mac recalled it, the first recordings by Tanner and Puckett for Columbia did not do very well either (nevertheless, they were brought back to New York for more recordings in September 1924 and recorded in Atlanta in June and September/October 1925). According to Mac, "Riley asked me to come over to Columbia and reorganize the band."⁹ This new group, called on record labels "Gid Tanner and his Skillet Lickers, with Riley Puckett," made its first recordings in April 1926. Because Mac was under contract to Okeh, his name did not appear on the label. The personnel of the Skillet Lickers varied from time to time, but at the early sessions probably consisted of Tanner and McMichen, fiddles; Puckett, guitar/vocal; and Fate Norris, banjo. Mac strongly resented Gid getting all the credit for the fiddling: "Well, things went real good and I think they sold about 750,000 copies of that first record and from there on in we were a hit but here I was--the man doing all the work and didn't even have my name on the record. I finally raised so much Hell about it that Frank B. Walker (Columbia's A & R man) put my name on all the records but the damage had already been done and Gid was starting to be known as the greatest old time fiddler in the country. People were hearing me fiddle on the records and thinking it was Gid. I started my own band as a result and left Gid out of it."¹⁰ Mac's recollection of this sequence of events is probably accurate, although the estimated sales figure for the early Skillet Lickers' recordings is doubtless too large by a factor of ten or so. The name for the new band was evidently Mac's idea, inspired by one of the most popular aggregations at the Atlanta fiddle conventions years earlier, the Lick (the)Skillet Band.

Between that first session in April 1926 and the last, in October 1931, the Skillet Lickers recorded eighty-eight selections, eighty-two of which were released. And during that time, Mac organized and recorded with a succession of other

THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

DAILY

Printed at second-class matter,
Post Office, Cincinnati, Ohio.

MONDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 2, 1933

THREE CENTS

Millions Of Members Lost Will Defend Their Title in Old-Time Fiddling Contest



THE SKILLET LICKERS

FROM all the surrounding hills, woods and valleys are coming fiddlers and challenges for the trophies to be determined at the National Fiddlers' Convention, scheduled at Music Hall for Saturday at 1:30 p. m. and Sunday at 1:30 and 7:30 p. m.

The original Skillet Lickers, now recognized as the outstanding old-time fiddling band of the United States, will be on hand to defend their title against such up-and-coming contenders as the Vagabonds, Layne's Mounties and the Gair Dodgers.

Other features of this unique gathering will be Clayton McMichen, present champion old-time fiddler, and Riley Puckett, champion guitar player, who will be there in person to give exhibitions of their instrumental skill.

"Smilin' Ed" McConnell, another picturesque interpreter of this type of folk music, also will be on hand to show what he can do. A three-hour program of varied and colorful entertainment is promised. Seats for the performance, priced at 25 and 35 cents, are on sale at the convention headquarters, 223 Palace Hotel.

Five Are Killed Daniel Mayo Faces His Initial Day To



WHAS Entertainer Champion Fiddler

Leader of Georgia Wildcats Wins National Title for Eighth Year.

Here's that "king of the hill" bill, "Blind Pile" Puckett, who comes from the south's mountains and tells about it in nasal song with guitar accompaniment. Riley will be a prize performer in a rustic show at Music Hall Saturday and Sunday.

The feature of the program will be an Old Fiddlers' Contest. There will be acts by Smilin' Ed McConnell, Skillet Lickers, Georgia Wildcats, Tom Kelly of Indiana, Jack Dodgson of Georgia, and many others.

Hoe-down dances, songs about Southern folk music, and other round music will be featured.

Announcement was made Monday of the selection of Clayton McMichen as national champion old-time fiddler for the eighth consecutive year. Mr. McMichen, leader of the "Georgia Wildcats," WHAS entertainer, won the title in Cincinnati Sunday night at the conclusion of a two-day contest sponsored by the National Association of Old Time Fiddlers.

He was victorious over more than 100 contestants from all parts of the United States. With the title, he received a \$200 award, a radio and other prizes.

"Smilin' Ed" McConnell and Jack Dodgson, guitar players of the "Georgia Wildcats," won first and second prizes respectively in the guitar playing contest. Bryant was given \$150 and Dunigan \$100. With Bert Layne, "Georgia Wildcat" fiddler, the group won the national string band prize—\$150.

The "Georgia Wildcats" performed over WHAS at 7:30 and 11:45 o'clock each morning.

Get Hot, Big Boy!

Old-Time Fiddlers Stomp And Sing In Contest At Music Hall—Georgian Is Winner.

The "Club Hoosewain" held its annual "breakdown" at Music Hall last night when more than 2,000 subscribers gathered together to enjoy themselves to their hearts content.

The piece de resistance of the evening was the eighth annual National Fiddling Contest, which was won for the eighth year by Clayton McMichen, Atlanta, Ga., whose presentation of a Brahms-Grove version of "Arkansas Traveler" knocked the patrons plunk out of their seats.

It was a gala event. Musical organizations of wide renown in sections of the lands where the topography is highly irregular contributed to the success of the occasion.

Among the participants were "The Skillet Lickers," "The Georgia Ramblers," (no affiliation with the South Bend Ramblers), "The Georgia Wildcats," "The Kentucky Ramblers," "The Dixie Vagabonds," and "The Jackson County Trio."

The "Skillet Lickers," composed of two guitarists and two fiddlers, were awarded first prize in this division for their efforts in musically presenting the virtues of "Devilish Mary." A prettier little gal they ever saw.

Among the individuals whose offerings were received with loud acclamations were: Mary E. Stacey, Jackson, Ky., fiddler; Samuel B. Bing, 42-year-old fiddler; Ed Crabtree, Spine Patterson, Robert Marble, Oscar Thomas, fiddlers; Wiley Puckett, Johnnie Moses, Rex Vance, guitarists; Jimmie Prentiss, banjoist, and H. Hardings, Lone Star "one man band," who played a guitar-harp and harmonica at one and the same time.

Favorites of the American music-lovers were played again and again while dancing feet of the muses—some sheltered by gray spots—tapped out the time.

Among the numbers which met with popular appeal were: "The Polka Dot Rag," "The Homebrew Rag," "Ridin' on the Homebrew Rail," "Old Abernathy," "My Carolina Home," "Arkansas Traveler," "The Old Hen She Cackled," "Alabama Gals," "Devil's Dream," "Jack Rabbit Feet," "Tag Time Ann," "Turkey in the Straw" and "The Town Hully."

At fitting intervals when the musical scores called for something in the form of a crescendo the musicians came through with some eddibling such as "D-lee-oh-lay-ho," "Hey, Whoo, Hey-Hey-Ho."

These specialties were received with wild approval, once particularly when the vocalist in singles of "Devilish Mary" pointed out that she "was as mean as the devil and hit someone with a shovel."

Members of the "Club Hoosewain" were enthusiastic in making comments about individual performances of the entertainers. When the fiddlers and string-drummers threatened to awaken and send down in their musical efforts, numbers of the audience exhorted them to redouble their attacks on their instruments, with shouts of "Tear it out, tear it out—'Go get 'em in there, big boy'—and 'Whoo-pee'."

Although numbers, which narrated of violent love, such as "Devilish Mary," and municipal difficulties such as "The Town Hully" received great applause, it remained for a palliative melody, "My Carolina Home," and shifting fiddling, such as that and "Turkey in the Straw," to break the all-time record for sustained and great approval.

OLD-TIME FIDDLERS MEET IN CONTEST

Kentucky fiddlers, the old-fashioned shouting kind, took part in the eighth annual National Fiddling Contest held Sunday at Music Hall, Cincinnati. About 3,000 persons attended. Although the Kentucky fiddlers were recognized as the outstanding old-time fiddling band of the United States, they were not declared winners.

Clayton McMichen, Atlanta, Ga., who played a Brahms-Grove version of "Arkansas Traveler," won the first prize for the eighth consecutive year. Mary E. Stacey, Jackson, Ky., fiddler, played several selections but failed to capture a prize.

Among the numbers which met with popular appeal were: "The Polka Dot Rag," "The Homebrew Rail," "Ridin' on the Homebrew Rail," "Old Abernathy," "My Carolina Home," "Arkansas Traveler," "The Old Hen She Cackled," "Alabama Gals," "Devil's Dream," "Jack Rabbit Feet," "Tag Time Ann," "Turkey in the Straw," and "The Town Hully."

At fitting intervals the fiddlers would shout and yell like so many Indians and the noise would thrum the hall. Clayton McMichen, the winner, broke all these shouting records.

The affair was held under the State Truck Law.

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W-L-S BARN DANCE

groups:

- a) With Riley Puckett, sometimes under the pseudonym of Bob Nichols; 1926-1931
- b) With McMichen's Melody Men, probably consisting of Mac and Bert Layne, fiddles; K. D. Malone, clarinet; Puckett, or Perry Bechtel, guitar; 1926-1929
- c) With his two sisters as Clayton McMichen & Singing Sisters (never released); 1927
- d) With Lowe Stokes & His North Georgians, probably consisting of Stokes and Mac, fiddles; Malone, clarinet; Hoke Rice, guitar; 1927-1930
- e) With the McMichen-Layne String Orchestra, probably consisting of McMichen Stokes and Layne, fiddles; Puckett, guitar; Malone, clarinet; Joe Livingston or Pink Lindsey, bass; 1928
- f) With McMichen's Harmony Boys, probably consisting of McMichen and Layne, fiddles; Slim Bryant, guitar; unknown banjo; 1929
- g) With Claude Davis, under pseudonym of Bob Nichols; 1929-1930
- h) Possibly with the Georgia Organ Grinders, personnel not certain but possibly with Mac and Stokes, fiddles; Melvin Dupree or Perry Bechtel, guitar; Frank Walker or¹² Lowe Stokes, pump organ; 1929
- i) With Hugh Cross, under pseudonym of Bob Nichols; 1930
- j) With McMichen's Georgia Wildcats, probably including McMichen and Layne, fiddles; Slim Bryant, Pat Perryman, and/or Jack Dunnigan, guitars; Jerry Wallace, banjo; 1931

In addition, Mac appeared on all the rural dramas, such as the Corn Licker Still series, and was uncredited accompanist (on fiddle) for several artists or groups: for Riley Puckett, Puckett and Hugh Cross, the McCartt Brothers and Patterson; and probably for blues singer Virginia Childs.

1931 was the last year with Columbia for the Skillet Lickers, either as a group or as individuals. In August 1932, Mac accompanied Jimmie Rodgers on one session for RCA. A letter from Rodgers to McMichen giving details of the forthcoming session is reproduced here. That same month, his Georgia Wildcats recorded for Crown in New York.¹³ Between 1937 and 1939 the Georgia Wildcats recorded several times for Decca. For most of these, the personnel consisted of Mac and Kenny Newton, fiddles; Slim Bryant, guitar; Raymond "Loppy" Bryant, bass; and Jerry Wallace, banjo.

An examination of the recorded output of all the various bands headed up by Clayton McMichen (which would exclude the Skillet Lickers) indicates a repertoire heavily biased in favor of current pop tunes, jazzy or uptown country numbers, and, to a lesser extent, turn-of-the-century favorites. Close to two thirds of the 80 or so titles that McMichen recorded for Okeh and Columbia with the groups enumerated above were pop tunes of comparatively recent (i.e., less than twenty years old) vintage. By contrast, over 90% of the titles issued over the name of the Skillet Lickers were



Above. (Left to right): Georgia Wildcats--Johnny Barfield, Bert Layne, Hoyt "Slim" Bryant; Clayton McMichen (seated) (1931).

Below: Clipping from McMichen scrapbook.

GEORGIA WILDCATS

Pittsburgh--Thousands of persons who have tuned in with interest to the broadcasts of Clayton McMichen and His Georgia Wildcat Fiddlers in their broadcasts from Westinghouse Radio Station KDKA have the opportunity to see them in the many theatrical personal appearances they are making under the auspices of the KDKA Artists Booking Service.

McMichen, known as the national champion fiddler of the nation, has been making phonograph records several years. Within a seven-year period more than 20,000,000 of his records have been sold. For five years he was organizer, leader and director of the well known Skillet Lickers. McMichen's Melody Men and McMichen Layne String Orchestra. He was also (instructor and organizer of the world's largest selling phonograph record known as "Corn Licker Still in Georgia."

This talented group is heard twice daily, except Saturday and Sunday, from KDKA at Pittsburgh. The Wildcats are on the air at 9:01 a. m. and 11:15 p. m. E. S. T. Recently McMichen was asked to what he attributed his success and his answer was "I have always tried to play whatever anyone wanted to hear, and as many times as they wanted to hear it. Let it be old or new if a man wants to hear the very latest song that's on the market we always try to play it for him; and if he wanted to hear "Shout Lala" or "What Have You" we always try to play it.

The Wildcats have had remarkable success in satisfying their audience in speaking in characteristic Georgia dialect McMichen says "We want all of you to come out and have a good time with us, and if we don't show you a good time, then ain't a cow in Texas and they tell me it's a hell of a country."

older traditional songs, ballads, and fiddle tunes. The material cut by McMichen's Georgia Wildcats for Decca in the 1930s was even more heavily pop-oriented. A notable exception was Mac's final 1939 session for Decca, at which time he cut an album of six old-time fiddle instrumental medleys. Apart from his work with the Skillet Lickers, Mac was featured on nearly 150 issued sides. Throughout his recording career, though his skills as an old-time head-down fiddler never waned, McMichen leaned toward jazz and contemporary country-pop music. As he told Hoeptner and Pinson, "...we played them Skillet-Licker records like that 'cause they paid us to play it like that. The fact of the matter, that wasn't what we were wantin' to do.... I didn't like playin' with Gid and Fate, because they just was about thirty years behind us, or forty, in the music business..."¹⁴ But in spite of Mac's evident desire to create a modern type of country jazz, he must have continued to have ambivalent feelings. He once replied to a letter from a radio listener asking why he played "them silly old tunes" with "I notice in my thirty-five years of show business that there's 500 pairs of overalls sold to every one tuxedo suit. That's why I stick to swamp opera."¹⁵

In about 1931-1932 McMichen left the Atlanta area for good and settled temporarily in Louisville. Through the early 1930s, the Georgia Wildcats played regularly on several radio stations, including WAVE and WHAS, Louisville; WGY, Schenectady; KDKA, Pittsburg; WCKY, Covington, and WLW, Cincinnati. In 1939-40 he returned to Louisville for a ten-year stint with one sponsor, Howell's Furniture Co., over WAVE. During that period his band, still called the Wildcats (or sometimes the Dixielanders), gave up country music and became a dixieland jazz band. They played six days a week over the radio, at picnics and parks, in theaters and in furniture stores, for more than ten years, until finally Mac retired from the music business in around 1955. At that time he owned and operated a beer and whiskey tavern in Louisville.

In the 1960s, interest in old-time music on college campuses brought "Pappy" McMichen to the University of Illinois and to Newport to perform, but he did not resume extensive activities. A serious auto accident in 1964 and, later in the 1960s, continued bouts with emphysema, limited his activities. He died on 4 January 1970 at his home in Battletown, Kentucky, not far from Louisville.

Pappy never really mellowed in his attitudes towards his associates of the 1920s. Though he bore my continued questioning in letter after letter with patience, finally, a few months before his death, he wrote, "It has been around 45 years since all this happened, and it would take a genius to remember all the questions you ask... I have given you about all the information I can think of, so if it is all the same to you, you will be doing me a favor to forget about it. In the first place,

I never got credit for what I did on all those records I made for Columbia, so it brings back a mild case of hatred about the whole deal, as I got a whale of a screwing in the deal. So let's you and I forget about the whole thing.... So now don't ask me any more questions about that bunch of nothing down there in Atlanta. They were all a bunch of stab-you-in-the-back no-goods, ... and the more I can forget them, and the longer I can keep them forgotten, the better. Sorry to make it so blunt, but it is just exactly how I feel about it...."¹⁶

If my brief summary has created an unflattering portrait of Clayton McMichen, I should hasten to add that his role in the early development of country music was indeed great; not only was he an outstanding fiddler, (he won the National Old-Time Fiddling Championship consecutively for 8 years, 1926-1932) but he penned some significant compositions ("Peach Pickin' Time in Georgia" is the best-known), and was instrumental in starting several musicians (for example,

Merle Travis) on their careers. He was a forward-looking musician, who did not try to distinguish between hillbilly, folk, or popular music. He wanted to put together the best of the several traditions. In the 1920s, his aim was to recreate jazz and popular music with a string band. He later admitted that Frank Walker had been right; those records would not sell anything in comparison to the wild, carefree down-home sound of the Skillet Lickers. Nevertheless, he had shaken hillbilly music rudely by the shoulders and tried to point it in a different direction; a direction that it resisted for another decade or more, but eventually followed. He deserves more credit than the industry gave him.¹⁷

FOOTNOTES

1. McMichen was interviewed more-or-less formally by Hoeptner and Pinson (see note 2), by Archie Green and Ed Kahn, Louisville, 30 July 1961; by Bob Shelton, Louisville, March 1964; by Archie Green at Urbana, 8 May 1965; and by Archie Green and myself in Battletown, Ky., on 25 May 1969.
2. "Clayton McMichen Talking," *Old Time Music* #1 (Summer 1971), 8-10; #2 (Autumn 1971), 13-15; #3 (Winter 1971/2), 14-15, 19; #4 (Spring 1972), 19-20, 30. Transcription of interview by Fred Hoeptner and Bob Pinson made on 7 July 1959.
3. *Atlanta Journal*, 19 September 1922, p. 14.
4. *Ibid.*, 29 September 1922, p. 21.
5. *Ibid.*, 29 September 1921, p. 4. For more information on Bud Silvey, see Charles K. Wolfe's comments in *The Devil's Box* #26 (1974), 54-59.
6. Exactly how the group first made contact with Columbia is not known. Frank Walker, Columbia's A & R man who was responsible for the company's initial ventures in both the race and hillbilly field, recalls having "discovered" them in

"America's Blue Yodeler"
JIMMIE RODGERS
EXCLUSIVE VICTOR RECORDING STAR
ENROUTE

Meridian Miss,
July 27th 1932

Mr Clayton McMichen,
Radio Station W.H.K.,
Cleveland Ohio.

Hello Clayton:

Tell son heres the dope on Recording. I plan on leaving here about Sunday morning July 31st arriving in Washington D.C. the nation's Capital Wednesday evening the 3rd of August, and will expect you to meet me there then, or not later than Thursday or Friday Aug the 4th or 5th. We will meet at my Bro and Sister in Law House Mr and Mrs Alex Nelson. The Adress is as follows 1148 Abbey Place North East. And Ole Fiddler and Violin playing fool I is Sho looking for you to be there.

I am driving through in the ole Cadillac Mrs Rodgers and my little Daughter Anita will be with me as far as Washington and we will go on to New York together. I am planing on having A good Banjo Player to go with us. You may knew him his name is Oddie McWindows. And boy can he play A banjo? Ill say he can. Kae he plays A 5 string Banjo ole style and also plays all the popular stuff. I mean takes solos and plays leads. Well he beats any dan thing I ever heard of Playing A Banjo Baring no body. Mr Peer says he wonte me to do at leaset 10 numbers so if you have any thing of your own be sure to bring it along because im pretty sure I can get several of your Songs Recorded. Then after the Recording is all finished we all go under the Hammer for the Audition with the N.B.C. which seems like A pretty ga good break as ther have been wonting me to work in Nwe York for the last 2 or 3 years. Now about this guitar player you spoke to me about on the Phone A few days ago. I will do all I can to get Mr Peer to use him but I would Rather Not guarant any thing for him. But I will pay his expensess if he cares to come along with you and take chances on working. I mean eating and sleeping expensess long as he is

Your Same Ole Pal Jimmie Rodgers

OLD TIME FIDDLERS CONTEST



\$50 in Prizes
IN PERSON...

Clayton McMichen
World's Champion Fiddler
Sixteen Times

Georgia Wildcat
National Champion String Band

"Chicken" Stripling
National Champion Buck And
Wing Tap Dancer

SCORES OF OTHERS

Including...
Joe Woods Band
Lyle Kestey
Lyle Davis
Sue and Ann Mason

SUNDAY, JUNE 6th
GLENWOOD PARK

Starting At 2:30 P. M.

Adults 50c

Children 25c



Clayton McMichen
& his
Georgia Wildcat



Courtesy of HOWELL'S FURNITURE CENTERS - TENTH RADIO ANNIVERSARY, JUNE 1950

At WSM, Nashville: (l to r) Blackie Case, Clayton McMichen, Red Penn, Carl Cottner, Joe Bowers (1936).

At Louisville: (l to r) Charlie Lee Day, Bob Simmons, McMichen, Tony Sheeles, Claude Cobb, Bernie Smith (1950).

Atlanta (see Mike Seeger's summary of his 1962 interview with Walker in *The New Lost City Ramblers Song Book* Oak, 1964, pp 26-29). McMichen wrote John Edwards (5 January 1958) that Columbia had wanted the group based around him and Puckett; as he was out of town at the time, Puckett brought Tanner to New York with him.

7. Personnel for the various McMichen/Tanner/Stokes stringbands presents a serious problem to the discographer. Because of the constant changes in members, each recording session has to be treated anew. The recollections of the surviving bandmembers are not always reliable--I have received different answers from Lowe Stokes, Clayton McMichen, and Bert Layne to questions of particular personnel at a given session. The four members at the July 1925 Hometown Boys session were identified by McMichen himself--to Guthrie Meade in 1960, and to me, after hearing a tape of one of the releases, in April 1967. I queried Lowe Stokes about his role in this early band when I visited him at his home in Chouteau, Oklahoma (30 April 1972); he did not recall for certain, but admitted it was possible he had played guitar in the group.

8. Letter to John Edwards, 5 January 1958.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. McMichen (letter to me, September 1966) listed Joe Livingston as bass player on some of the sessions, and Pink Lindsey on others.

12. McMichen, when I interviewed him in 1969, remembered quite distinctly that Walker played the pump organ; Stokes, on the other hand seemed equally positive that he himself was the organ player.

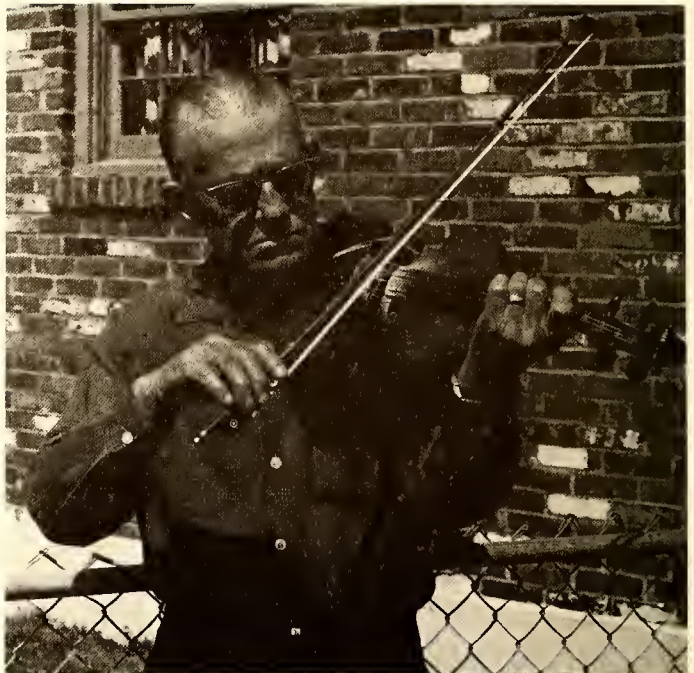
13. In his 1959 interview with Hoeptner and Pinson, McMichen stated that these recordings were made for Columbia and then leased to Joe Davis for his various labels; this seems unlikely, because Columbia files have not yielded any information about such a session.

14. Interview 7 July 1959.

15. Shelton interview, March 1964.

16. Letter to me, September 1969.

17. This article is a considerably expanded account of the one given in the chapter, "Early Pioneers" in *Starts of Country Music: From Uncle Dave Macon to Johnny Rodriguez*, edited by Bill Malone and Judith McCulloh (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975). For further information on McMichen and his colleagues, see my article, "The Skillet Lickers: A Study of a Hillbilly String Band and Its Repertoire," *Journal of American Folklore* 78 (July-Sept 1965), 229-244 (available as JEMF Reprint #5); also Stephen F. Davis, "Uncle Bert Layne," in *The Devil's Box* #26 (Sept 1974), 19-27; and Tony Russell, "Georgia Stringbands," in *Old Time Music* #4 (Spring 1972), 4-8.



Above: At Urbana, Ill., 1965.

Below: Clayton & Daisy McMichen in front of their home in Battletown, Ky., 1969.



CLAUDE HALL -- PROFILE OF A RADIO-TV EDITOR

By Ken Griffis

[The music trade periodicals, such as *Billboard*, *Cashbox*, and *Record World*, have come to play a significant role in the contemporary music industry, not only serving to document trends, tastes, and changes, but also--some say--to influence those factors as well. The role of the "charts" in influencing the popularities that they are designed to measure has caused some commentators considerable uneasiness. In this, the third of a series of interviews with leaders in the business end of the contemporary music scene, Ken Griffis chats with an influential and knowledgeable journalist, Claude Hall.]

Texans allegedly boast of the biggest and best of everything. This image was shattered when Claude Hall informed me he was born in Brady, Texas, a town so small, "it isn't close to anything." Tiring of being asked what Brady was near, Claude now informs people that it is about sixty miles north of the LBJ ranch.

When Claude was fourteen, the family moved to Winters, Texas, where he began his literary efforts by writing for the local newspaper. His first serious venture began at eighteen when he wrote short stories for such "pulp" magazines as *Manhunt* and *Trapped*, being paid the respectable sum of 2¢ a word. A few years later he moved up to writing for the "slicks", where he earned 5¢ a word. His writing efforts, while acceptable by most standards, were such that he felt the need to use a pen name so as "not to be tainted" in his later writings. This point was further emphasized by his desire to hide the fact that he was a science fiction fan while in high school and college, such interests, at the time, being frowned on by school administrators. The need to supplement his income, however, made his writing more than just a hobby.

Attending Texas University in Austin, Claude found his interests split between a career in physics or journalism. It wasn't until his junior year that he made the firm decision to take up writing as a full-time profession. Graduating in 1958, he took his first job with the *El Paso Herald Post*. The starting salary of \$50.00 a week proved a bit disappointing, but Claude decided he would stick it out for a while, spending a fair amount of his off-duty hours south of the border where he gained an appreciation for tequila and Mexican music. Claude remarked that he came to see an interplay between Mexican music and the Bob Wills style of Western swing. While with the *Herald Post*, he wrote a number of articles on the lore of the Southwest, becoming somewhat of an expert on the subject.

Feeling that he needed some seasoning with a big city publication, Claude hitchhiked to New York City where he contacted the editor of the *New York Journal American* by phone. When asked about previous experience, Claude told of his association with the *El Paso Herald Post*. It became readily apparent to Claude that his chances of being hired were slim, as the editor was still laughing two minutes later when he hung up. Claude found employment with the *American Druggist*, remaining for about a year and a half, writing of the exciting virtues of toothpaste and other sundries.

In late 1960, feeling a bit more secure in his profession, Claude married Barbara Schwartz and at the same time, began writing and editing interesting but highly imaginative adventure stories for *Cavalier*, a well-known "blood and thunder" publication. Tired of New York, Claude and Barbara returned to Austin, Texas, where for the first time in his career, he found that his talents had "run dry." He suddenly realized that he wasn't endowed with a God-given talent for writing, and decided then and there if he were to succeed it would take a great deal of hard work and dedication. Still feeling that he could do an acceptable job, Claude hocked his typewriter in 1962, and headed for New Orleans where he landed an interesting position as court reporter for a highly respected newspaper, the *Times-Picayune*. Claude strengthened his journalistic skills and at the same time gained an insight into the intrigues of political power.

When an opportunity presented itself in 1965, Claude once again returned to New York where he accepted the post of Radio and TV Editor for *Billboard Magazine*. In his early days with *Billboard*, he directed their country music interests from New York. Unquestionably, the multi-talented Claude Hall has made a major contribution to the continuing success of the very informative *Billboard Magazine*.

INTERVIEW

Claude, have you always had an interest in country music? You must understand, Ken, that for many years I didn't know there was any other kind of music. As a lad, I heard about something that was called opera, where people screeched at each other. At that age I also was aware of Mexican music, but I didn't come to appreciate it until I was much older. As I grew smarter I came to enjoy some opera also.

Were you particularly impressed with any of the artists of the 'forties and 'fifties? You bet. A number of the artists were literally gods to us, they weren't just entertainers. Take Ernest Tubb; he was a great family favorite. I can remember one of his songs that my mother would sing all day long--ironing, cooking, cleaning--she sang it over and over. That's just one example of what country music meant to the fans of that day. The people lived their music much more than they do today. We loved the music. It was as real as life itself.

I have always been partial to Western swing; did it do much for you? You better believe it. We thought Bob Wills was as great as they came. He was a legend even in those days and I can remember driving through New Mexico, between Hobbs and Carlsbad, and seeing a sign tacked to a telephone post saying that Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys were to appear in some small place. That was all that was necessary--he packed the place with standing room only. No matter how large or small the place, Bob drew hundreds of people every night of the week.

I would guess country music was just starting to recover from the impact of rock about the time you became associated with Billboard. Did rock and roll disturb you too much? Not really. I can enjoy just about any type of music. I do recall the impact of rock on country music very clearly, however. Some of the country artists tried to do both rock and country. A few succeeded, most didn't. I remember on the Louisiana Hayride when George Jones tried to sing "Long Tall Sally" and he would make it one time and then he was through for the night. That didn't keep him from trying it again the following week.

What were your early years with Billboard like, Claude? There were really three or four of us that shared the load in those days. Hal Cook, who was editor at the time, did a great job. Paul Ackerman, now retired, made an outstanding contribution and was, and is, one of the most knowledgeable people that I have ever met. He can quote Chaucer and Browning to you, and in the same breath recite word for word many of the Hank Williams songs. Paul collected two types of records, blues and country. To his way of thinking the two are very similar--just different singers.

As I recall, about the time you joined Billboard in 1964, for one reason or the other, Billboard became more closely associated with country

music than it had in the past. Is this true? I would say so. Hal, Paul, Lee Zhito and myself joined the CMA about that time as we felt country music was adrift and could do much better than it was doing. At the time, there weren't many full-time country music stations and most of those lacked professionalism.

Then you are saying that Billboard actually worked to promote the development of country music? Yes, I feel that we did our part. I recall that we published an annual for several years called "The World of Country Music," in which we interviewed artists ranging from Leon Payne to Vic McAlpin, telling how they got their start, who they worked with, how they got their inspiration for their music, etc. In one issue Paul Ackerman compared the lyrics of Hank Williams songs to some of the literary works. Paul did a great job, and I must say Hank came out pretty darn good too. Another thing we did--Hal Cook put together the three-volume "Country Music Hall of Fame" album--the proceeds from which went toward the building of the hall of fame.

What was the extent of your personal involvement? Well, as radio and TV editor for Billboard, I wrote as much about country music as I could. You see, in my position I write about the whole musical scene, not just about country music. And I admit that I consciously wrote more about country music, perhaps than I should have, as I felt it important to help improve the image.

I wasn't aware country music had a bad image at that time. Perhaps "bad" isn't the proper word. Let's just say country music wasn't selling itself. We felt it could and should have projected a better image. You know, Ken, it's a fact that the fans of country music are the most loyal fans there are. We had to convince Madison Avenue that the fans would buy the products that were advertised on country radio. I perhaps should say country radio had a weak image, more so than the music itself.

I guess it's safe to say that in the early sixties, country music was in need of direction. It sure was. The sound was changing and no one really knew which way to go with it. You'll have to remember that "Country Music" was a dirty word to a heck of a lot of people in those days. Even some of the fans would avoid mentioning that they liked it. I recall how people reacted when I told them I was a country music fan. They looked at me like I had a hole in my head. Imagine, a fellow with a Bachelor's degree liking country music! Far out. Nashville took on the responsibility of trying to make country music respectable again. They spent a good deal of time with the Madison Avenue crowd, who knew little of the music, informing them of the potential of the product. I remember one airline wouldn't accept an association with our music because they honestly believed that country music fans didn't fly. A lot

of people in Nashville put in many an hour selling--or reselling country music.

Some might question if this Nashville influence has been all to the good. You have pointed out several positive steps taken in Nashville over the past several years, and even their most severe critics would agree it hasn't been all bad. However, there are those who feel that country music as interpreted by Nashville might not be country in the traditional sense. Is this true? Yes and no. Certainly it's a different sound than we have been used to, such as Ernest Tubb and Roy Acuff. I guess you could say that it has a different theme. I have always felt the secret of success for country music was that it had a message or told a story that the fans could relate to. Now it seems that the music has gotten into the "sex, sin, and salvation" syndrome, and I'm not so sure that this is good for the music in the long run. I personally feel that Nashville has gotten away from songs concerning the realities of life. After all, that's what country music is all about.

Do you enjoy today's country music? With exceptions, yes. I have found my tastes in music have broadened over the years. I like some classical music, some jazz, some rock, some bluegrass. But to answer your question, or as I interpret the question, some of the music today is good, some not so good. Let's just say that too much of it is rather sloppy.

With the obvious trend on the part of most country stations toward a MOR or pop-rock format, are we to see the disappearance of the traditional country music sound. Let's not kid ourselves, Ken, country music has gone rock. There is a distinct trend away from country music as we have known it. I'm not necessarily saying this is bad for the radio stations. I assume they feel this is the profitable way to go. But some of the stations have a strange way of looking at things. I can remember a station back east that wouldn't think of playing a Kitty Wells record, but they did promo her personal appearance in town. There was a packed house for her performance. You figure that out.

I realize the stations are trying to capture a portion of the MOR stations's listening audience but what will the country stations do when their sound can't be distinguished from the pop-rock sounds? Well, that's a problem they are facing right now. The country sound has become so fractionalized, with a little of the traditional sound, a lot of the progressive, country rock sounds, that it has become difficult to tell one sound from another. I personally don't recognize a lot of the music and some of the artists presently associated with the country music scene. In time, I assume there will be just one sound and the big losers will be those fans who still love the traditional country music sounds. Heck, when I want to hear some good old country music, I put on one of my tapes. Just this morning I listened to a couple of hours of some great sounds.

But let's face it, the name of the game is profit and it must be assumed the stations know what they are doing.

That's a pretty damn sad commentary, Claude. Perhaps so, Ken, but you have some pretty sharp people in country music and the impact of the music is greater today than ever before. Take a look at Bill Ward over at KLAC, he's about as sharp as they come and you can't deny his success. However, I will admit that I don't entirely agree with all the thinking that has taken country music down the road it's traveling. The conclusion that you can draw listeners away from a MOR station by changing the format, and at the same time retain your old listeners has yet to be proven to me. It would appear more likely that you could draw these same MOR listeners and at the same time, keep your present listeners, by having a good country format, not too different than you had, say ten years ago.

Well, Claude, perhaps we can exchange tapes. You bet.

Does Billboard's rating chart on country music accurately reflect record sales, or for that matter, the popularity of a particular song? Well, we take pride in its being an auditable chart. It's the only chart I know of from which a CPA can audit the methodology and results.

*Explain how you obtain the information that is reflected in your chart. We survey some sixty record stores in twenty-three markets, along with a number of radio stations. This is done for all of our music ratings, not just country. Bill Wardlow, who is Associate Publisher of *Billboard*, and myself select the radio stations to be surveyed. From the record sales and air play, our people rate the record according to a prescribed formula.*

You seem to indicate that Billboard relies to a certain extent on radio station air play for your charting. I thought it was the other way around. No, we check air play, in addition to record sales for our charting information. We keep a close watch on any unusual report that appears to be out of line with similar information obtained. You have to remember, radio stations do a lot of surveying on their own, and we benefit from that. If a station doesn't do a fair amount of local surveying, they are doing a poor job.

Isn't it possible for a given record store or radio station to "hype" a rating? Sure it is, and we have had it happen. But we watch our reporting sources very closely and we can spot anything out of line in a hurry.

Can a record company exert influence on a record store? In the early days this did happen, particularly with the record company giving away records and the store selling them at a discounted price. This in turn inflated the sales of a given record. We corrected that problem rather quickly. You have to remember, Ken, it's a competitive market and if you don't have a record that's "in

the groove," you just can't sell it. You can't move a "stiff" no matter how hard you try.

Is there much difference in charting, say a rock record versus a country record? Yes there is. Most country records get played almost as soon as they are received, and there haven't been a lot of newcomers in country like there are in rock. The country stations know their artists and will give them air play. With a rock station, and so many artists and groups coming and going, it almost becomes a necessity for most of the rock recordings to get their first air play on the smaller stations and work its way up to the major stations.

Did the advent of albums create a problem for you on your rating system? Not really. Surprisingly though, at present I would guess that anywhere from 60% to 90% of country singles are sold to the juke boxes. I just don't know

what's happened to the singles market: it's a problem for the record companies. I might add, the sales of eight-track tapes rank right up there with album sales.

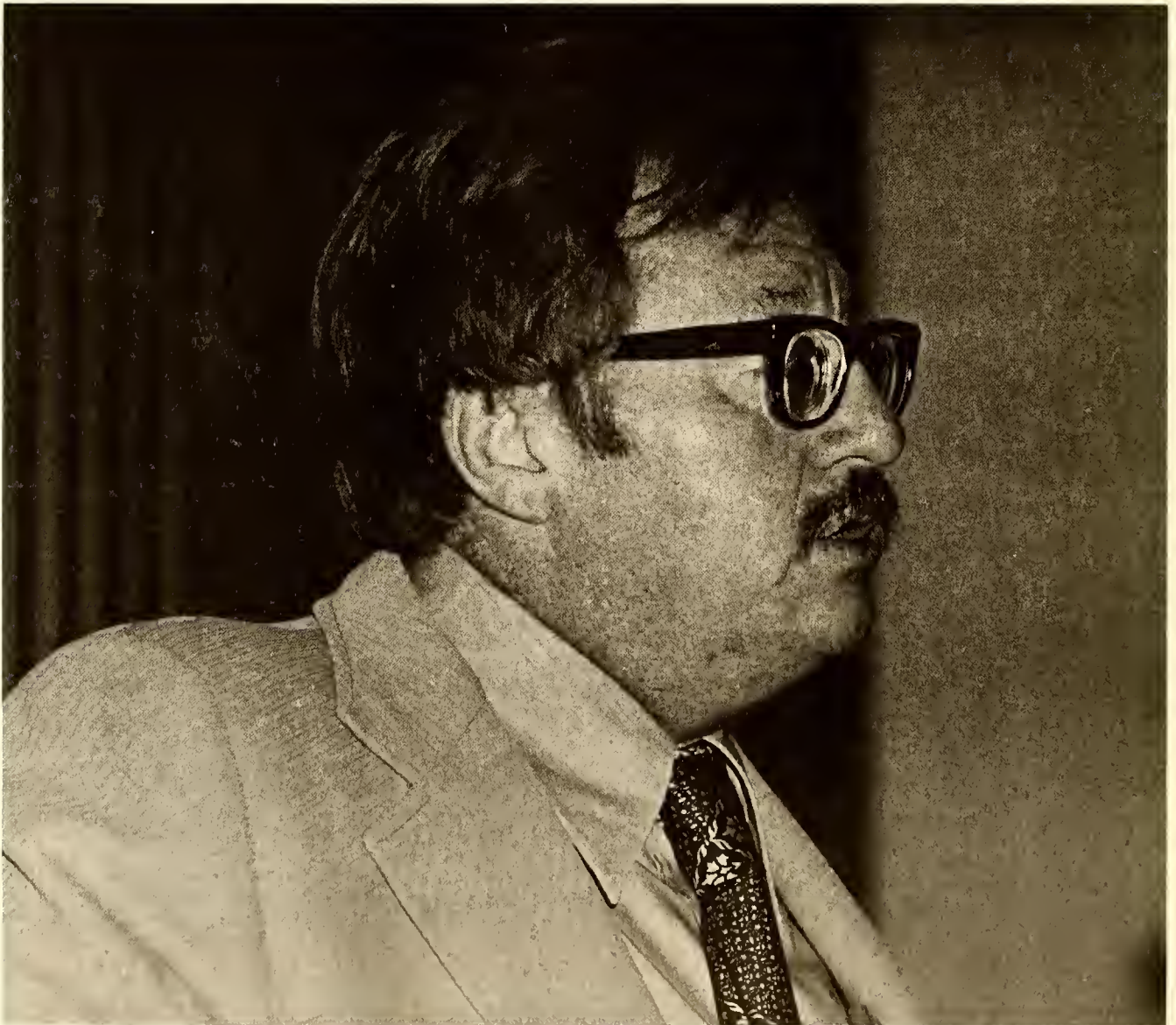
Does your position with Billboard require that you do much traveling? Quite a bit. Last year, for instance, I made it to England, Brazil, and Australia. I might mention that the Australians are great fans of country music.

What do you do on these trips? I give a lot of speeches. I'm called upon to talk about the problems of radio and TV in the United States, for instance. I also do a lot of research on radio and TV in the countries I visit. I've found these visits most interesting, and I might add, at times the reception I receive is a bit embarrassing. They treat me like I was some kind of hero.

Well, Claude, what makes you think you're not? Thanks for your time.

Below: Claude Hall

-- North Hollywood, Calif.



VERNON DALHART: COMMERCIAL COUNTRY MUSIC'S
FIRST INTERNATIONAL STAR (Concluded)

By Walter Darrell Haden

From Dallas, Mrs. Kate M. Bryan wrote the magazine to say she had known the Massey family for a good while. Guy Massey's older brother, Robert, she declared, picked up "The Prison Song," as she called it, while tramping about the nation in his youth:

His brother Guy, a vaudeville actor, came from N. Y. to visit his family, and while here Robert taught him a number of these songs thinking they would be good material for his vaudeville work. . . . Robert was living in my house at the time of the song's great national popularity and discussed it with me from time to time. Guy's attitude toward this, , musical fraud. . . was that he "had beat Robert to it in the perpetration of a huge joke on the public."

Immediately Mrs. Bryan's letter drew a reply from Seaborn C. Massey, Jr., of Dallas. This older brother of Robert and Guy, protesting his late brother's integrity, insisted that "both words and music" of "The Prisoner's Song" "were written by Guy Massey and were his own composition regardless of what others may say in reference to it."

The song which made the biggest selling vocal disc in history, is--despite Dalhart's, Massey's, Shilkret's and others' claims to its authorship--another folk song. In folk song collections "The Prisoner's Song" is also known as "Prison Walls," "Sweet Lullur," "Meet Me in the Moonlight," and "I Have a Ship on the Ocean." "All Bound Down in Prison" is Riley Puckett's title for the traditional ballad as he recorded it. Folk song collections having one or more versions of the song include those of the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress, A. K. Davis, Jr.'s Folk-Songs of Virginia, Sandburg's The American Songbag, Helen Creighton's Songs and Ballads of Nova Scotia and W. R. MacKenzie's Ballads and Sea-Songs from Nova Scotia.

In a letter of September 1960, to Jim Walsh, Robert Williamson of Petersburg, Ontario, Canada, wrote

In 1924, at the age of 19, I came to Canada from Scotland with my father's family. In the fall of 1925, while teaching in northern Saskatchewan, I heard "The Prisoner's Song"

(probably Vernon Dalhart). Home for Christmas, I was singing this song around the house when I was rebuked by my mother. "Sing the song right," she said. I was surprised, but still more surprised when mother sang the song from beginning to end in the broad Doric Scots. This was a song she had known when she was young. She had learned it at least before her marriage in 1901.

Norm Cohen has already pointed out that "the traditional 'Prisoner's Song' . . . shares some lines with a different, and historically important, hillbilly ballad of the same name recorded by Vernon Dalhart in 1924. Dalhart's song, incidentally, has also entered tradition--if indeed it is not derived from traditional sources."

"One of the editors" of the Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore in Folk Songs from North Carolina notes that he "learned the tune and a few stanzas of a "Prisoner's Song" version forty years ago [1912] " in Mississippi. Either editor Henry M. Belden or editor Arthur Palmer Hudson had heard the song from a cotton chopper, a young white man, twelve years before Dalhart was to record Edison #51461 and Victor #19427.

According to Dorothy Scarborough, the traditional American folk song is a descendant of an old English song, "Here's Adieu to All Judges and Juries." Thomas Burton and Ambrose Manning have collected variants of the song under the titles "New Jail," "Prisoner's Song" and "The Old Prisoner's Song," the latter variant sung by the late Clarence Tom Ashley (1895-1967) in a recording April 7, 1966, at his Shouns, Tennessee home. The tune to the Ashley variant, however, is more nearly the melody of "I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes," as recorded by A. P., Sara and Maybelle Carter (Victor V- 40089; VE-49859-3; February 14, 1929) with which "The Old Prisoner's Song" shares an almost identical first stanza:

Ah it'd been better for us both if we'd never
In this wide wicked world had never met.
While the pleasure we seek here together
I am sure I can never forget.

In the early nineteenth century an extremely popular parlor song was a weeper called "Meet Me by Moonlight Alone." Written by J. A. Wade, an Englishman, the song shares individual lines and phrases with the Dalhart hit. Harold Simpson in his A Century of Ballads reports that sales of the Wade song were enormous for many years after its publication.

It is difficult to know whether Wade actually composed an original work in "Meet Me by Moonlight Alone." Perhaps he--as apparently Dalhart, Massey and Shilkret appear to have done--simply served as the catalyst through which elements of several earlier folk or composed songs came to be fused in a fresher, even more popular and enduring form. Evidently Wade's song had a published and oral circulation widespread enough to have placed it in, or returned it to, the oral tradition. Similarly, the estimated million-plus record sales of Dalhart recordings of "The Prisoner's Song" certainly appear to have been a circulation pervasive enough to have recycled that song into a continuing folk tradition once again.

Thanks to the Dalhart recording, commercial country music had been launched with a flourish. His many sessions on "The Wreck of the Old '97," often paired with "The Prisoner's Song" would proliferate internationally for a decade, and longer, on more than fifty labels and subsidiaries. Victor alone sold over a million copies of the two Dalhart sides in the U.S. and Canada. Most other labels releasing the multiple Dalhart sessions of these songs averaged four to five reissues from their matrices, almost always reissued under different record serial numbers and often under different pseudonyms.

Because of the folding of all but the two or three major recording companies during the Great Depression of the 1930s, reliable ledgers on Dalhart record sales are scant. Understandably, conflicting estimates have been claimed on the total record sales for Dalhart's two biggest hits. Dalhart himself told Bridgeport (Connecticut) Post writer Anne Whelan that over twenty-five million copies of his recordings of "The Prisoner's Song" were sold in the song's heyday, saying its best year was 1926, two years after his first cuts on it. The retired singer said in the 25 June 1944 interview that so far he had received almost \$100,000 in royalties on recordings and sheet music sales on "The Prisoner's Song" alone. (Sheet music sales ran over a million copies.) If each of the more than fifty other labels and subsidiaries issuing and reissuing the two sides sold an average of 100,000 copies of each successive reissue of one or both hit songs, the non-Victor record sales on Dalhart renditions of the two songs could easily surpass twenty-five million copies. Whatever the exact number of total sales on Dalhart's two biggest sides, there may have been no greater singles sales in the history of the recording indus-

try, let alone in commercial country music recording annals. And there were other million-plus recordings cut by Dalhart. "The Death of Floyd Collins" was one of these. Also enjoying heavy sales and wide circulation--some on more than twenty-five different labels--were Dalhart cuts of "My Blue Ridge Mountain Home," "The Letter Edged in Black," "Golden Slippers," "The Convict and the Rose," "The Little Rosewood Casket," "The Dream of the Miner's Child," "Climbing up de Golden Stairs," "Little Marian Parker," "The Crepe on the Old Cabin Door," "Lucky Lindy" and "The John T. Scopes Trial," among many others.

If record sales averaged as few as 10,000 copies on each of the close to five thousand releases and reissues by Dalhart in a recording career that spanned almost twenty-five years, the singer's record sales--excluding those of "The Prisoner's Song," "The Wreck of the Old '97" and "The Death of Floyd Collins"--would top fifty million. This total combined with another twenty-five to thirty-five million records sold on his three biggest sides could swell Dalhart's lifetime record sales to more than seventy-five million copies. Considerably more than two-thirds of Dalhart's total record sales was of genuine country music recordings.

At the time of Jimmie Rodgers' death in 1933, an estimated twenty million records of the one hundred and eleven songs in his recorded repertoire had been sold. The nine L. P. albums RCA-Victor has since issued will probably account for another million copies. These figures combined with posthumous singles sales by Rodgers hardly seem likely to equal the total sales on one Dalhart pairing alone, "The Prisoner's Song" and "The Wreck of the Old '97." Sales on all releases of the A. P. Carter Family recorded canon (two hundred and seventy-three masters of 250 songs) combined with those of Rodgers apparently fall considerably short of the total record sales of Dalhart's 5000 releases of close to 1000 different songs, exclusive of his three biggest hits. Even a pop music artist of the magnitude and longevity of Bing Crosby has had fewer than 3200 releases.

Dalhart's songs-recorded, records-released and records-sold figures are hardly more astonishing than the fact that the singer recorded on all major and minor labels and their subsidiaries during the second half of the 1920s under more than one hundred and ten different individual and group pseudonyms, many of which were not used exclusively for any one artist or group. Before the general advent of exclusive recording contracts, these names--for the most part unknown to Dalhart--enabled recording company entrepreneurs exploiting his talents to field simultaneously scores of different Dalhart releases competing with each other for the record buyers' money. A kind of one-man recording industry in his busiest years

from 1924 through 1928, the singer and his services were in such demand that he not infrequently cut three different sessions a day to keep up with the market for his recordings. From his first session for Edison Recording Laboratories in early 1915 until his final takes for RCA-Victor in 1938, this tenor, as "Vernon Dalhart," would compete over the years with increasingly formidable competition but none more formidable than himself as: James Ahern, John Albin, Mack Allen, Wolfe Ballard, James Belmont, Harry Blake, Harry Britt, Billy Burton, Jeff Calhoun, Jess Calhoun, Jimmy Cannon, Jimmy Cantrell, Ed Clifford, Al Cramer, Al Craver, James Cummings, Frank Dalbert, Frank Dalhart, Vernon Dall, Charles Dalton, Vernon Dell, Hugh Donovan, Joseph Elliot, Frank Evans, Clifford Ford, Jeff Fuller, Jep Fuller, Albert Gordon, Leslie Gray, David Harris, Harry Harris, Francis Harold, Lou Hays, Fern Holmes, Howard Hull, Frank Hutchinson, Joe Kincaid, Fred King, Louis Lane, Hugh Latimer, Hugh Lattimore, Tobe Little, The Lone Star Ranger, Bob Massey, Guy Massey, B. McAfee, Bob McAfee, Carlos B. McAfee, Warren Mitchell, George Morbid, Dick Morse, Charles Nelson, Gwyrrick O'Hara, Sam Peters, Joseph Smith, Josephus Smith, Cliff Stewart, Edward Stone, Howard Stone, Billy Stuart, Will Terry, The Texas Tenor, Bob Thomas, Al Turner, Allen Turner, Sid Turner, Bill Vernon, Billy Vernon, Herbert Vernon, Val Veteran, Vel Veteran, Tom Watson, Bob White, Bobby White, Robert White, Walter Whitlock, George Woods, Mister X. In addition, he sang on recordings on which the featured artists were identified as Allen and Parker, The Archie Ruff Singers, The Arkansas Travelers, The Arkansas Trio, Ballard and Samuels, the Barbary Coast Four, The Birmingham Blue Bugles, The Broadway Quartet, Calhoun and Andrews, The California Ramblers, The Cramer Brothers, Dalhart's Big Cypress Boys, Dalhart's Texas Panhandlers, The Domino Quartet, Evans and Clark(e), Fred Ozark's Jug Blowers, The Harmony Four, The Jewel Trio, The Jones Brothers, The Kanawha Singers, Ladd's Black Aces, Mitchell and White, The National Music Lovers Quartet, The Old Southern Sacred Singers, The Oriole Trio, Peters and Jones, The Regal Rascals, Salt and Pepper, The Smoky Mountain Sacred Singers, The Virginians, The Windy City Duo and The Windy City Jazzers. These in addition to an indeterminate number of sides on which he sang vocal refrains, unidentified, with an undetermined number of dance bands.

Dalhart claimed in a mid-1940s letter to Marion Hoffman that he could recall recording under only a half dozen assumed names and that most of these were chosen by "recording managers." But of the above pseudonyms, Guy Massey and Bob Massey were cousins to Dalhart, Tobe Maddox and Tump Little (Tobe Little) were rancher neighbors from his childhood. An impressive number of the other surnames are still familiar last names in Jefferson, Texas. Certain of the noms de plume such as Will Terry (Marion County Sheriff during the singer's youth), Harry Blake, Bob

Thomas, Al Turner, Jeff Calhoun and Al Craver --among others--are identical given names and surnames of Marion Countians, several black, whom the youthful Try Slaughter knew in and around Jefferson. Mack Allen, the singer's third most-used recording names, is the pronunciation of yet another Texas town with which Dalhart was acquainted.

It seems more than probable that such a confusing welter of pseudonyms weakened rather than strengthened the total impact that one unmistakable identity could have worked for Dalhart. The singer sometimes received warnings from his fans that other singers were imitating his style. One letter advised him to "watch out for a new singer named Al Craver," who was singing some Dalhart songs as well as Dalhart himself could. There could hardly be such confusion among Jimmie Rodgers and Carter Family fans: Rodgers was released as himself, the Carter Family as itself and no one else on recordings.

The Carters' August 1 and 2 sessions and Rodgers' 4 August 1927 session with Ralph Peer at Bristol on the Tennessee-Virginia border have often been called the historical starting point for commercial country music. Yet those who collect and study the still plentiful recordings by Dalhart suspect that it was this country music pioneer rather than Rodgers or the Carters who gave the music its first and most important commercial impetus. The discrepancies in recording dates and in record sales between Dalhart's country hits beginning in 1924 and the later successes by Rodgers and the Carters cannot be honestly overlooked.

In contrast to the many re-releases of Rodgers and Carter Family masters, no album-length L. P. has so far been issued by any major or minor label of Dalhart-only masters. "The Death of Floyd Collins," "The Wreck of the Old '97" and "The Prisoner's Song" have been anthologized by RCA Victor on occasion, but only one of the three vintage L. P.s reissuing Dalhart sides is any longer in print. Circulation of Dalhart cylinders and discs is mainly an "underground" transaction through taped dubbings exchanged between collectors around the world. Many of these collectors have lent assistance to this continuing study of the Dalhart canon, however gargantuan and incomplete it may still be. Hundreds of persons have contacted me since the beginning of this research in 1969. Many have lamented the dearth of reissues, even of the singer's biggest hits.

When one searches for answers to the question of why Dalhart as music form progenitor has been neglected, possible explanations appear most complex. In the first place, the country-bred singer had something few other country singers wanted or managed to acquire: extensive formal training in vocal music and a

successful professional background in operatic and, then, in popular music. That Dalhart could have been a successful light opera tenor, recording also in that genre with what Thomas A Edison called "one of the finest voices" he had ever heard, and then a rather well-known singer of pop music on records has apparently seemed rank heresy to some country music purists.

However, the myth that Dalhart was a synthetic interpreter of country music, an Easterner who "wore spats"--as one member of the Country Music Hall of Fame recalled with some scorn--can easily be dispelled by incontrovertible proof of the singer's tough Texas roots and early grounding in the materials of the violence and emotion-packed folk and country music that brought him his chief fame, for instance "The Jealous Lover of Lone Green Valley," "The Hanging of Eva Dugan," "The Death of Lura Parsons," "Barbara Allen," "The Butcher's Boy," "The Sinking of the Great Titanic," "A Handful of Dirt from Mother's Grave," "The Alabama Flood," "Bury Me out on the Prairie," "The Fatal Wedding," "The Jones and Bloodworth Execution," "The Drunkard's Lone Child."

It is not difficult to show that Dalhart's 1924 entry into country music was an easy and natural transition. The New York-based artist proved he could revert to the first music he had known with credentials genuine enough to give country music its first national and international exposure and initial commercial thrust. He sang country music, he wrote Hoffman in 1943, in "my native dialect." Some of the folk instruments Dalhart played on hundreds of recording sessions, as well as a great many of the cowboy and country songs he recorded, appear to have been learned from his rancher father ("The Cowboy's Dream," "O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," and "When the Work's All Done This Fall"). "The harmonica," he continued, "I learned to play on our farm in Texas before I was four years old." Dalhart was equally adept at playing the jew's harp or the kazoo on the "turn-arounds" of a great wealth of the downhome music he recorded: "Little Brown Jug," "Hear Dem Bells," "Little Liza Jane," and "Casey Jones," for instance. "At the age of three and while still wearing dresses, he imitated his daddy by playing the harmonica and the jew's harp," ran a C. B.S. network program note on Dalhart.

This evidence seems to contradict the near dogma of the powerful and possibly opinionated Ralph S. Peer, former A. & R. man for Victor Records. Undue importance has been accorded, it appears, to the late Mr. Peer's October 1955 letter in Variety:

Vernon Dalhart was never a hillbilly and never a hillbilly artist. Dalhart had the peculiar ability to adapt hillbilly music to suit the taste of the non-hillbilly population. Perhaps we could characterize him as pseudo-hillbilly. Dalhart was extremely successful as a recording artist because

he was a professional substitute for a real hillbilly.

Peer's best-known discovery, Jimmie Rodgers, sometimes recording with Louis Armstrong and other jazzmen and "pop" musicians, could hardly be described by the above standards as "hillbilly."

"I am no more Hill Billy than you are," Dalhart wrote Kansas wheat farmer Marion Hoffman on 26 August 1943. I am aware, however, of no objection the singer made to more apt terms--"old time," "folk" or "country"--applied to his recordings after 1924. "Hillbilly," a label coined in derision, is to this day a pejorative term, and later country artists of the stature of Bradley Kincaid, Red Foley, and Ernest Tubb also found the label offensive and unrepresentative of their work. Even though much of the music Dalhart recorded after 1924 was called hillbilly by the recording industry, few but those who wish to heap scorn upon the music call it hillbilly today. I cannot agree that Dalhart's authentic, powerful renditions of country songs, at one time popularly designated "hillbilly" for the market, must necessarily label him hillbilly or "pseudo-hillbilly." Because he knew and felt country music, he hardly had to fake its rendition in the recording studio. No matter what other types of music an artist learns to appreciate or to become proficient in performing, as he gains a wider sophistication of taste, it is not unreasonable that the musician will retain a genuine knowledge and love of that music he learned first.

While close relatives of Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family have assisted students and fans wishing to know more about the "Blue Yodeler" and the Carters, Dalhart's posthumous reputation has suffered from a lack of such help. The singer's daughter-in-law and one of his grandsons have been the only family sources. Dalhart's daughter--Janice Slaughter Shea, his only immediate survivor--knows much of her father's personal life and career, having been her father's pianist for concerts at Carnegie Hall, the Hippodrome Theatre and at various other auditoriums around the nation. As accompanist and travel companion on many of her father's tours before her marriage, the talented young pianist knew a long line of public figures such as Thomas Alva Edison through her father's career. Her knowledge and memorabilia of her father's career during its busiest decade (1918-1928) may prove the key to any definitive biography of this important figure in American music.

If there ever was any blot at all on the family escutcheon, it has most certainly been atoned for by the family's most accomplished member. Dalhart's considerable contributions to American music--country, popular, semi-classical, and classical--should certainly have

redeemed the Slaughter and Castleberry reputations in genealogy-conscious Jefferson, but then one recalls the fact that Try Slaughter, the ambitious young tenor, changed his professional name to Vernon Dalhart. Not one of his more than one hundred pseudonyms uses any part of the singer's legal name or that of his mother's surname. Whether one calls him Slaughter or Dalhart or one of his scores of sobriquets, the interesting legal histories of some members of his family serve only to add additional color and country authenticity to an already exciting life and career. These ancestors' individuality also may shed some light genetically on a personality which some of Dalhart's associates and acquaintances described as "cantankerous."

This image of Dalhart as overbearing and given to irascibility is borne out in the testimonials of some of those who knew him. The late crooner Gene Austin, for instance, who wrote more than one song Dalhart recorded, said the singer's temperament resembled that of "a grouchy old storekeeper with the piles."

Charlie Bowman, a country fiddler for Columbia in the twenties, told Jim Walsh he

knew Dalhart very well--met him in New York on one of my recording dates and on several occasions later. He was a very nice fellow to talk to, and was a very good mouth-harp player and singer--very serious about his recording work along with Carson Robison. Vernon was high tempered. He would fly off the handle if he made a mistake while making a recording, but he only got mad at himself. I have sat in the studio with him while he was recording.

Carson Robison described his former partner as "a very difficult person to get along with. From the time I knew him until we split up, he had a continual chip on his shoulder." The Chetopa, Kansas singer-writer-whistler who gave country music "Life Gets Tejus," "Take Me Back to My Boots and Saddle," and scores of other standards, said he broke with Dalhart for two reasons, chiefly: He did not want to continue to cut his partner in on a generous share of the sheet music and record royalties from every Robison composition Dalhart recorded, and he objected to Dalhart's summary replacement of fiddler Murray Kellner with Adelyne Hood without consulting either Kellner or Robison. "I asked Dal . . . if he had told the . . . fiddler about it. His reply was, 'Why do I have to tell him anything?' I grant that he had some tough breaks when he first got to New York . . . But even after things began to break for Dal he couldn't get over his bitterness at life . . ."

Robison's widow wrote me

It took a lot of deliberation on Carson's part

to make the break. He finally asked me what he should do. I had seen what the demands and arrogance of Dalhart was doing to him and I felt that it was Carson's material and his ability to make the arrangements and orchestration that was more responsible for their success and I encouraged him to make the break. He never had reason to regret it.

In contrast to these unflattering assessments of the artist as a man, Dalhart banjoist John Cali recalls him as "a gentleman of good breeding and good manners" while writers and singers Bobby Gregory and "Red River Dave" (Dave McEnery) looked up to him as a father figure: "a warm, gentle, kind and generous man who helped a number of us establish recording and writing careers in country music." McEnery, whose first published song--"Johnnie Darlin'"--was one of the six sides cut in Dalhart's last recording session (1 May 1938) and released in 1939, recalls Dalhart's discovering him as a New York club act at the Village Barn and then guiding the younger Texan into recording and radio network careers as "Red River Dave."

However, Dalhart's bosses at Victor, whom he later accused of not distributing or promoting his 1939 Bluebird releases, have tended with Ralph Peer to remember the singer much less charitably. One former Victor executive told me in an interview in Nashville that a knife fight between Dalhart and Robison in a New York Victor studio is probably more than a legend. One of the company's A. & R. men from the 'twenties and 'thirties has apparently garbled a faulty recollection of the murder of Dalhart's father with his impression in the fifties that the son had "killed a man before he left Texas." The same Victor official, according to Robison, was so upset at Dalhart's split with Robison that he offered to spend \$5,000 "to help me find a voice to replace" Dalhart. The replacement was another Kansan, Frank Luther Crow.

Early in the thirties, A. & R. men were noting realistically the decline in Dalhart record sales, attributable chiefly to three causes: first, the Great Depression, which had put many of the labels releasing Dalhart masters out of business, while cutting back the output of country releases by the recording companies surviving the 1929 Stock Market Debacle and what was to be virtually a decade of hard times; second, the rising popularity of newer and younger country music stars, notably Jimmie Rodgers, the Carter Family, Gene Autry, and other singers whose regular appearances on live radio shows, barn dances and personal appearances were producing formidable competition in their sales of phonograph records, song and picture folios; third, the gradual decline in the quality of Dal-

hart arrangements and material recorded after the singer's break in 1928 with Carson Robison. Frank and Phil Crow, the Luther Brothers, had joined Dalhart's earliest country music guitarist, harmony singer, songwriter and idea man. The new Kansas combination was generally called the Carson Robison Trio on its many recordings. This smooth-sounding group often copied the vocal and instrumental style as well as the materials and arrangements of the trio that Dalhart, Robison and Adelyne Hood had pioneered--when the duo of Robison and Frank Luther was not recording Dalhart-Robison-like duets. During Dalhart's struggle then to make it almost alone, he used studio personnel whose instruments and styles of instrumentation caused his recordings to lose much of their early country simplicity and purity of sound. The Robison-Luther collaborations were to serve most passably for the familiar Dalhart-Robison style. To the imprecise ear of Dalhart's large following, Frank Luther's Dalhartian voice as Bud Billings could easily be mistaken for yet another pseudonym of the ubiquitous Vernon Dalhart. And lending credibility to Luther's out-Dalharting his prototype on more and more country recordings was the unmistakable presence of the Robison songs, tenor harmony, whistling and plain guitar styles that had made early country music art of so many Dalhart-Robison recordings.

Bobby Gregory believed a number of Dalhart's competitors

were influenced by Dal. They were all trying for a "Prisoner's Song" or another "Old '97", so they got in there as close as they could, using his phrasing, grace notes, slurring and sliding the end notes and little vocal tricks, even Rodgers on some of his songs. Then Frank Luther and Robison. Arthur Fields. Another one was Bradley Kincaid. Those fellows heard something successful and tried to come as close to producing it as they could.

At the height of his career, Dalhart bought an expensive new two-story English Tudor home, replete with solarium, black maid and underground garage for his Cadillacs on fashionable Halstead Avenue in suburban Mamaroneck, New York. However, apparently his work did not leave him the leisure to enjoy his home as much as he might have. The burden of heavy recording commitments plus frequent U.S.-Canadian tours and overseas appearances in the British Isles probably took their toll of time Dalhart had to devote to his wife and two children. "He was not what I would call an ideal father or husband," Carson Robison's widow recalled. "We had some wonderful dinners with them . . . and very enjoyable evenings. It was Mrs. Dal that kept things going. He had a wonderful wife who was a real homemaker, a good wife and mother." Even Gregory in his

adulation for Dalhart admitted that there would be periods of several weeks at a time during which the recording artist, maintaining a suite in the downtown New York Knickerbocker Hotel, would not see his home and family. Gregory and Mrs. Robison both suspected some resentment on the part of the family toward Dalhart's having to be away from home as much as he was. Dalhart's daughter in a letter seemed to confirm this resentment: "I did not know Vernon Dalhart very well."

The palmy days were short-lived. Dalhart's grandson, Robert Marion Slaughter, recalls, "The money was there. My father (Marion Try Slaughter III) got a Stutz Bearcat for a high school graduation present. It was good and then all of a sudden came this down thing. Grandfather lost an awful lot of money in the stock market, in the Crash." Robison remembered when he and Dalhart "split in 1928 . . . he was worth between \$150,000 and \$200,000, and he told me one time that he was going to show them how to make some real money on the stock exchange--not knowing a thing about it, of course."

With the national economic crash came the disastrous slump in demand for new Dalhart sessions. The few recording companies still around continued to reissue his tried and proven sellers, for which there continued a steady market even through the worst Depression years, but from 1933 until the ill-fated Bluebird sides in 1938 (his "Lavender Cowboy" was blacklisted by ASCAP in 1940 as a "blue" song), Dalhart would never make another recording. He was to live another ten years, continuing to query A. & R. men and making periodic trips to try to secure sessions from some of the very companies who had once offered him more work than he could take care of. By 1939 the Dalharts had sold their luxurious home to move to a smaller home on Grove Street in Mamaroneck.

The former recording artist started work as a night watchman at The Bullard Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, in October of 1942, scarcely a month before the death of his son. As Dalhart wrote Marion Hoffman on March 30, 1943: "You'll be surprised to learn that I am in Bridgeport, Conn. with The Bullard Co. at present. In the safety division. Have been here since last October. War Work you know. Got tired of loafing, and to keep from going nuts, I got a nice easy job . . ." He added in a postscript, "Please use my same old address as I go home every weekend, [to Mamaroneck] only 35 minutes from Bridgeport," where late in August, 1943, he was still "engaged in the Safety Division of a big tool plant [The Bullard Co.] . . . for the duration, maybe . . . I stay in Bridgeport all week, coming home for [the] weekend . . ." Early in the new year, the retired singer-turned-defense worker moved himself and his wife to a house on Bridgeport's

Mill Hill Avenue. Here they were of even more assistance to their lately widowed daughter-in-law and her two children.

As early as 26 February 1942 he had written Hoffman: "It has been four years since I have made a record . . . I am trying to negotiate with Columbia Recording Corp'n [sic] of Bridgeport, Conn. to record a couple of new numbers that I am interested in, but I do not know as yet, what their answer will be." Ironically, the singer was looking for work in a city where almost fifty years earlier the Bridgeport Die & Machine Company and the Columbia Recording Corporation had pressed a long succession of best-selling Dalhart recordings. The "negotiations" this time were not to produce a favorable result for the singer.

On 30 March 1943, the new night watchman was writing Hoffman:

I met a young musician at the plant (The Bullard Company, Bridgeport, Connecticut) today, and he invited me to his home to talk over things. He plays guitar and piano very well I hear, also, composes. I don't know what will come of it; I haven't sung a note in quite some time. So: maybe my singing technique is gone, who knows? You can't go on forever.

With the close of the war, Slaughter-Dalhart turned his thoughts again to making a come-back in recordings: "From letters I receive [sic]," he continued in correspondence with Hoffman,

many of my old fans would like to hear more of the numbers that I do, but the Recording Managers seem to think otherwise. The public doesn't get a chance to decide . . . I have heard rumors that new Record Companies are springing up now, but I have not investigated as to who they are, or where located. It might be worthwhile to do just that . . . I still think the wax tells the story good or bad, and maybe it's my ego that makes me believe I can still make a better Hill Billy Record than anyone I've heard about so far.

Instead of a return to the recording studio, Dalhart's vocal talents turned themselves to voice studio teaching as he and his wife moved to the Garden Apartments on Brewster Avenue near his employment at the Harry Hawley Voice Studio of Bridgeport. His professional card read: "VERNON DALHART, Voice Placing, Professional Coaching." "He had only a few students," his grandson recalled. "It's a pretty terrible thing to say he was on the downgrade, you could call it. That's all, I think, that Bridgeport really knew of him." Dalhart was more optimistic about his teaching in a 4 October 1946 letter to Hoffman:

So far as my voice is concerned, I am in better shape than ever in my life. Believe

it or not. Teaching has brought back many good changes in my work, and it is hardly believable, but true.

He would continue to give private vocal lessons even after he had taken fulltime employment as night checkout clerk in the basement at the then fashionable Barnum Hotel. Jerry Cairnes, a bellboy then, told me on 17 March 1972, at the Barnum that Dalhart at sixty-five was "elderly":

He was kind of slow spoken, like a Southerner . . . He didn't get around very well. He was in poor health . . . Nightman and the hours can knock anyone down. At first I thought he was putting me on about writing "The Prisoner's Song." I never heard him whistle or sing anything. I don't think he was that happy.

Early in 1948 Dalhart's hotel employment and voice teaching were interrupted for several weeks by his first heart attack. His recovery was sufficient enough, though, for him to return to his baggage checkout job at the Barnum, where he continued to work until his second attack that summer. He and Mrs. Dalhart were living then at 2825 Fairfield Avenue, Apartment 1. He was not to recover from this attack. Joe Drochetz, an itinerant discographer and student of early recording artists, was in Bridgeport in early September and was allowed a fifteen minute visit with the ailing singer. He recalls that Dalhart's memory was poor and that the patient could not converse for very long. He did ask Drochetz whether or not any of his records could still be bought in the stores.

The end came at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 14 September 1948, at the Bridgeport Hospital. Dr. Benjamin Horn of 754 Clinton Avenue was in attendance and signed the death certificate: immediate cause of death: coronary occlusion. Funeral services were conducted 17 September at the Mullins and Redgate Funeral Home at 1297 Park Avenue in Bridgeport. Interment was in that city's Mountain Grove Cemetery, where the tombs of master conman Phineas T. Barnum and blind hymn writer Fanny Crosby are conspicuously marked. Dalhart's modest gravestone reads only "Marion T. Slaughter 1883-1948."

At the apex of Dalhart's career, a New York Times critic prophesied that Vernon Dalhart recordings would be collected and studied in years to come for the insight they would give future generations into folkways of the North America in the first decades of this century. As Jim Walsh observed in 1960, "Time apparently is in the process of vindicating that writer's judgment."

Those who fail to acknowledge Dalhart's

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seminal importance to the emergence of commercial country music overlook his four-year domination not only of the fledgling country music record business but also his reign as the busiest and most successful vocal artist in all fields of the recording industry from 1924-1928. At the time Chicago studio broadcast experiments were about to become the WLS "National Barn Dance" and well before that show could develop a country recording star with any sort of national following, Dalhart had millions of country records sold around the world. Before the Grand Ole Opry was even a gleam in the eye of George D. Hay, Vernon Dalhart recordings were international harbingers of a half century of commercial country music to follow.

Country music fans can be grateful that a singer of such talent, experience and rural background was willing as early as 1924 to stake his career on a new, hardly tried commercial music form. It was Dalhart's growing up in the very materials of country music which gives his unmistakable voice a sincerity and authenticity whenever and wherever his recordings are heard again. It was more natural for him to become the nation's first great country music recording artist than it had been for him to build distinguished careers, first in classical and then in popular music. That such a phenomenon as Dalhart did occur in the American music industry has been all too little known. I hope that this article has made the Dalhart paradox more understandable and the singer's preeminence in the earliest commercial country music a matter of record.

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[Note: This article, part I of which appeared in the previous issue of JEMFQ, is an expanded version of a chapter that appears in Stars of Country Music: From Uncle Dave Macon to Johnny Rodriguez, edited by Bill C. Malone and Judith McCulloh (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975).]

A PRELIMINARY VERNON DALHART DISCOGRAPHY. PART XIX: DURIAM RECORDS

The two short Parts of our continuing Vernon Dalhart discography in this issue of JEMFQ focus on labels of the early 1930s. Durium Records, manufactured by a New York firm in ca. 1931, were pressed not on wax but on heavy sepia paper, one side only, very similar in appearance to the Hit of the Week records. On the back side of the records listed below was a photograph of Dalhart.

5029	Rovin' Gambler	Durium 9-1
5030	Letter Edged in Black	Durium 9-2
5031	Hand Me Down My Walkin' Cane	Durium 9-3
5032	Golden Slippers	Durium 9-4

PART XX: CROWN RECORDS

Crown Records was an enterprise of Eli Oberstein in the early 1930s. Some material was leased or bought/sold to or from other companies (e.g., from Starr Piano Co.; to Paramount). The records were pressed by RCA Victor, for whom Oberstein later worked as an A&R Man, in ca. 1932. Varsity releases were issued under the pseudonym of Bill Vernon. The Homestead catalog number cited was also used for a different coupling of two Carson Robison recordings.

1709	Faded Rose	Crown 3323, Varsity 5107 (BV)
1710	A Letter to Heaven	Crown 3323, Varsity 5113 (BV)
1711	Hoopee Scoopee	Crown 3356, Varsity 5085
1747	It's Great To Be a Doctor	Crown 3356, Varsity 5085
1748	The Wreck of the Circus Train	Crown 3340, Varsity 5113 (BV), Homestead 23058
1749	There's a Rope Around My Picture	Crown 3340, Varsity 5107 (BV), Homestead 23058

COMMERCIAL MUSIC GRAPHICS #34

MIDNIGHT AND OTHER COWBOYS

By Archie Green

In recent years Austin, Hollywood, and Nashville have combined to delineate a new breed of cowboys--neither ordinary workers with cattle, hardened gunslingers, nor national mythic figures, but rather wasted or comic anti-heroes. The movie *Midnight Cowboy* (released in May 1969) centers not on a brave range rider but on a callow bus rider, one who reverses Horace Greeley's dictum by going East to hustle fame and fortune. From a small, time Texas cafe, our dishwashing cowboy is plunged into a surrealistic Manhattan of perversion and poverty. The film is both meaningful and powerful in a cosmos of Tim Leary and Ken Kesey, but it inverts the message of Ned Buntline, Owen Wister, and Zane Grey, as well as the portraits of Frederic Remington, Charles Russell, and Will James.

The midnight cowboy's many peers in current songs are alternately mysterious, rebellious, nostalgic, lonely, cosmic, gypsy, or hip, and they seem to favor rhinestones. These superkickers are found on the LPs of such creative writer/performers as Kris Kristofferson, Kinky Friedman, Doug Sahm, Jerry Jeff Walker, Billy Joe Shaver, David Allen Coe, Waylon Jennings, and Willie Nelson. Not all these artists are comfortably linked to each other, nor is there a good generic term to categorize them and their type of music, which has been variously tagged as "redneck rock," "country rock," or "progressive country." I have been particularly interested in the term "cowboy" when used to describe this special group of musicians and the appearance of the new lost cowboy in their poetry. Some of these musicians have accepted the label "cowboy" as a defiant badge of distinction, thus recycling it to moor themselves simultaneously to a romantic past, as well as to explain to all of us something of our troubled present.

A previous Graphics feature (#23) dealt with cowboy music in a variety of pictorial forms: two fine paintings (*Home Ranch, Cowboy Singing*) by Thomas Eakins, ca 1889; a slick guitar-strumming dude on a corral fence, courtesy RCA Victor Records, 1943; four jacket covers of LPs issued between 1960-1970 featuring traditional western performance. My purpose in selecting those

seven items spanning eight decades, was to link some of the authentic visual and aural themes formerly utilized in illustrating cowboy music. Here, my task is more formidable in that I wish to comment on buckaroos who have not yet found an Eakins. Nevertheless, in this feature, I shall offer a number of new and old representations of cowboys and shall use these selected graphics to frame a study of shifts in the meaning of the word "cowboy."

Before plunging into all the nuances in contemporary usage of "cowboy," I shall illustrate the word's fresh meaning by drawing on a 1973 composition by Peter Rowan, still current on the radio late in 1975. "Lonesome L.A. Cowboy" appears on *The Adventures of Panama Red*, an LP by the New Riders of the Purple Sage. Rowan's hero sings: "I been smokin' dope, snortin' coke, trying to write a song, forgettin' everything I know 'til the next line comes along." This passage catches me, not because of the references to drugs, but rather because the cowboy has been completely removed from his traditional ballad setting. He is neither rescuing a companion nor trailing cattle, rather he is transformed into a writer trailing an elusive metaphor. Not only is this Angeleno lonely and frightened, but he is also an alienated intellectual seeing life from a distance. Pens and guitars may or may not be superior tools to lariats and saddles, but the former seem to be the best tools available to country-rock cowboys.

How did the cowboy emerge during the 1970s within scores of country songs as a tattered outlaw--a hippy in a Stetson? This question's answer is spread out in dozens of LP liner notes released in the last five years, as well as in related interviews and concert reviews. A fine example of "cowboy" as a descriptive label for an alienated musician comes from "bad-boy-in-leathers" Waylon Jennings in a talk with Rolling Stone reporter Chet Flippo (6 December 1973). Jennings noted that an El Paso honky-tonk crowd included "some pretty wild old cowboys. You walk in there, like last night, and they say, 'He's a cowboy singer, let's whup his ass.'" In this tightly compressed statement the El Paso fans (old cowboys) are booted and raucous hellions, died-in-the-wool conservatives ready to pounce on any long-haired, leather-clad, liberated stud (cowboy singer). Jennings' double-prong usage of "cowboy" had tremendous semantic elasticity, for it is at once

redneck audience and isolated artist, straight and freak, hunter and hunted.

From our national beginning, "cowboy" has functioned to span polar meanings. During the Revolutionary War the word was used pejoratively to describe Tory guerrillas who beguiled patriotic Americans into the brush by tinkling cowbells. Between the military lines the false cowboys, loyal to King George, ambushed and killed George Washington's men. This evil connotation surfaced again in the Rio Grande Valley after the Texas Revolution (1836) when Anglo cowboys rustled Mexican longhorns. In the classic sense, a vaquero was a mounted ranch hand who tended cattle; but an early Texas cowboy, according to observer Charles Webber in Tales of the Southern Border (1853) was still a criminal, a bandit, an outlaw. After the Civil War the word was gradually normalized, or shorn of opprobrious coloration, when longhorns in great numbers were driven north to market. Cowboys at the end of the Chisholm Trail did raise Cain, but they were also recognized as hard-working Calvinists, and no longer stigmatized solely as violent raiders.

The food needs of a growing industrial and urban nation established the social setting in which the word "cowboy" was re-shaped positively to fit a special class of working people. By economic standards cowboys became cousins of other food handlers, before and after: dusty millers, sweaty bakers, wheat threshers, fruit tramps, salmon fishermen, airplane crop-dusters, bracero crop-pickers, supermarket stacker-boys and check-out girls. My reference to market employees is not intended as a facetious analogy. In my friendship with Glenn Ohrlin, a traditional cowboy singer and former rodeo rider, I have learned that his central self-descriptive adjectives are "plain" or "regular." On his small Ozark ranch he integrates craft skill and common sense to relate cowboying to the work habits of other people. In his own folk-song book The Hell-Bound Trail (1974), Glenn continually insists that cowboys endlessly work at hard, rough jobs and that they are neither gun-slingers nor walking myths.

It is tempting at this juncture to insert a pen-and-ink sketch by Glenn Ohrlin of a present-day cowboy at work. Instead, I urge that readers see Glenn's book, and I turn here to two century-old illustrations. Because of my special interest in the musician's role as a cultural documentarian, as well as in the many kinds of commentaries built into folksong, I have sought out for past JEMFQ features a great variety of representations of folk and folk-like musicians and their artifacts.

As a prefatory statement to this study, two early pictures of carousing cowboys, full of raw

vitality, are reproduced. They date to 1867 in setting, but to 1874 in publication. In the latter year, Joseph G. McCoy's book appeared: Historic Sketches of the Cattle Trade of the West and Southwest (Ramsey, Millet Hudson: Printers, Binders, Engravers, Lithographers Stationers, Kansas City, Mo.). McCoy's classic has been reprinted in facsimile many times, and in a particularly fine edition (1940) by Arthur Clark (Glendale, California), with an additional introduction by Ralph Bieber. McCoy is remembered today as the founder of Abilene, the city at the end of the Chisholm Trail where Texas cattle were received for rail shipment to Chicago. To illustrate his book, McCoy invited Professor Henry Worrall of Topeka to see the boom town's glories. I have selected two of Worrall's Abilene sketches: Drunken Cowboy on the "War-Path" page 136, and Dance-House page 140.

The first engraving is the earliest visual portrait available to me of the shoot-em-up, hell-raising cowboy--the ancestor figure for Waylon Jennings and his fellow country/outlaw singers of the present decade. The second engraving is especially important to students of rural music and dance. There are few available pictorial depictions of Anglo-American stringbands before the rise of photography. Hence, I assert that this is the earliest graphic of a rural white stringband. Can any art historians unearth earlier pictures of this type? Finally, McCoy tells us about the hoedown music which was played in this frontier scene of "abandoned debauchery."

A more odd, not to say comical sight, is not often seen than the dancing cowboy; with the front of his sombrero lifted at an angle of fully forty-five degrees; his huge spurs jingling at every step or motion; his revolvers flapping up and down like a retreating sheep's tail; his eyes lit up with excitement, liquor and lust; he plunges in and "hoses it down" at a terrible rate, in the most approved yet awkward country style; after swinging "his partner" clear off of the floor for an entire circle, "then balance all" with an occasional demoniacal yell, near akin to the war whoop of the savage Indian. (p. 139)

The body of cowboy literature is immense--autobiographies, histories, critical essays, picture books, fiction. Newcomers are urged to look into Joe Frantz and Julian Choate's The American Cowboy (1955) for a start. I do not mean here to slight fine studies by Ramon Adams, Mody Boatright, J. Frank Dobie, Austin Fife, Richard Lingenfelter, John White, and other scholars. Their writings make it clear that the cowboy did not remain entirely a working figure in the closing decades of the last century. He also became a



DRUNKEN COW-BOY ON THE "WAR-PATH."




"DANCE-HOUSE."

and Track and

First in Families

THE ~~TOP~~ CALL

and the Box



INDOOR SPORTS :-: By *TAD*

REP' AS
W. BROWN

ROWN on the Shelby standoff here of good, bad and indifferent. I lost his rep as a superman. I defense his smaller opponent, ch he would knock over the ings, and some explanation, offer nothing better than a kick a member of the jump ss box and announced. "The

[illegible]

us over, these scribes who sat
poor corner were treated to
of straw cushions. Most of
n gathering mob, having be-
to pop bottle showering in-
Louis ball park, didn't mind
thing like soft cushions any
as they did the stings of the
red Shelby mosquitoes. As a
of fact most of the mos-
whose presence was one
of the delights of this little
a few days ago, had
led or disappeared when the



**SEALS WIN AND
LOSE TO**

**Pacific Coast League
RESULTS YESTERDAY**
San Francisco 5, Sacramento
1 (morning game).

**O. C. COACH TO
DICK MEDMEN**

**Yesterday's Home
Run Hitters**

'BRICK' FOUR R ENOUGH

AS A FAMOUS "hippie" and it did afternoon (note that the crowd in California was larger than the Berkeley-Gibbons battle). It's too bad the boxing fight than four rounds, financial bust like the

Collins and Duffy were seen around here for a draw and that's about as fast as Collins can run faster than Collins and although there wasn't Collins knows his stuff the jaw with a left hook came right back and Collins looked a little didn't show any bad teeth Both boys fought a good

Draw Bout

Mickey Wins

WILLIE NELSON MICHAEL MURPHY



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16

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SATURDAY NITE
SPECIAL GUEST
STAN ALEXANDER
THE ORIGINAL COSMIC COWBOY

legendary figure, courageous and formidable, who could ride even under the weight of heavy rhetorical comparisons such as Pegasus of the Plains.

Although folklorists distinguish legend from myth, much western literature uses these genres interchangeably. In part, old trail drivers and ranchers themselves romanticized their calling in memoirs; in part, dime novelists and tent showmen sought to create a new folk hero. Retrospectively, one does not marvel that a special set of workers was entwined both in folk imagination and in popular literature, but rather that it began so early. In 1887, John Baumann, a British traveler perceptively wrote:

The cowboy has at the present time become a personage; nay, more, he is rapidly becoming a mythical one. Distance is doing for him what lapse of time did for the heroes of antiquity. His admirers are investing him with all manner of romantic qualities; they descend upon his manifold virtues and his pardonable weaknesses as if he were a demi-god, and I have no doubt that before long there will be ample material for any philosophic inquirer who may wish to enlighten the world as to the cause and meaning of the cowboy myth. (Frantz, p. 70)

Good studies are available on the role of the cinema's singing cowboy in expanding American frontier lore, and I, too, have touched this subject in a previous Graphics feature (#29) on Gene Autry. Students of horse operas generally date western films to 1903 when The Great Train Robbery was made. In 1910 a three-reel film of Buffalo Bill's touring Wild West Show was released. This formulaic production, based on countless dime-novel predecessors, itself set filmic patterns still viewed today via television programs. Also, in 1910 the Essanay Company began a long series of Broncho Billy miracle plays for Saturday matinees. During the 1920s cowboy Tom Mix replaced Billy, but even the Mix realism was frozen into contrived, romantic plots. Among some adults there were extreme reactions to hokum in film and fiction; trash to spoil youthful minds, harmless escape, dangerous fantasy.

Because the cowboy figure in the post-Civil War decades had been both normalized (worker) and mythologized (folk hero), it automatically gathered to itself a simultaneous set of defenders and detractors. When pulp writers, and later screen directors, featured guns, guitars, and bravado, contrasting realists stressed thorns, fleas, and grit.

One early response to stamped-out romantic

images was that of criticizing the wrangler's theatricality. Teddy Roosevelt wrote in Ranch Life in Montana (1887), "In swaggered two men, dressed to the highest pitch of cowboy dandyism." Humorist George Ade (In Babel, 1903) embellished the portrait, "To see 'em cavortin' around town here in their cowboy hats and gassin' in front of every store." During the 1920s the swaggering dandy did his cavortin' in a very specific place--the drugstore. By definition the drugstore cowboy was a braggart, loafer, or good-for-nothing poseur dressed like a westerner but not really one. In February 1925, College Humor used the term generically, and drawings by John Held, Jr., and his many Jazz Age imitators, soon began to appear. Their cowboys in exaggerated bell-bottoms, with or without chaps, were depicted lounging at soda counters and ice cream parlors.

Credit for this pejorative tag goes to Thomas Aloysius Dorgan (Tad), cartoonist, sports writer, and inventor of considerable slang (1877-1929). Word-sleuth Peter Tamony has provided me with Tad's original "Indoor Sports" cartoon from The San Francisco Call and Post (5 July 1923) in which were drawn three drugstore cowboys in the saddle. The cartoon is reproduced here in exact size; the dudes are dressed sharply but not yet in cowpoke costume. A detail which adds to Tad's bile is the sign over his soda jerker's head, "Taste a cake eaters sundae." He used both terms "cake eater" and "drugstore cowboy" to mean a ladies man, a flapper's foil, a playboy. If one hears "cake eater" as a sexual euphemism, one can sense something of Tad's contempt for pseudo cowboys, whether in sharp suits, raccoon coats, or range-riders' garb.

Tad's mocking term is still alive. In Pat Frank's novel, Seven Days to Never (London, 1957) the line appears, "She married a marijuana-smoking drugstore cowboy." This drugs-drugstore connection is important for it underlies one of Nashville's first emotional reactions in the 1960s to "folk-revival" and "turned on" songwriters such as John Hartford. Does it not seem strange in 1975 to recall that "Gentle on My Mind" in 1967 was perceived by many country music stalwarts as a far out or hippy composition? I was in Nashville when Glen Campbell first presented "Gentle" to television audiences. Hartford and I were both amused and pleased that his number was "making the charts." I can recall no Nashville critic at that time equating "hippy" with "cowboy," but a few years later the latter word was being used in speech to cover country music's hipbilly and outlaw fringe. When Kris Kristofferson was nominated for a Country Music Association annual award with "Sunday Morning Coming Down," he appeared on prime-time television and by his off-beat conduct offended his hosts. It was after that broadcast (14 October 1970) that I first heard Nashville people class Kris as a cowboy--light years removed from Gene Autry and Roy Rogers.

While Kristofferson's conduct still nettled Nashville's brass, Paul Hemphill reported on the CMA awards program sponsored by Kraft and emceed by Tennessee Ernie Ford (New York Times Magazine, 6 December 1970). "You could sense Tex Ritter and Roy Acuff and all the rest hunkering down in their seats as [Kris] floated to the stage of the Grand Ole Opry House to accept the award: suede bell-bottoms, shoulder length hair, strange deep-set Jack Palance eyes, weaving back and forth with his back to the audience for nearly sixty seconds like a cowboy who had lost his way. . . . Nashville's Music Row is still seething. 'I mean, hell, he didn't even wear a tux.'" Hemphill, a superb reporter, grasped at once the ironic image of a tux-less cowboy, but one not so lost as to be prevented from lassooing a Nashville prize.

Kristofferson's appearance has become an oft-told anecdote in the shop-talk which has clustered around the country music industry. David Allan Coe, self-billed as the mysterious rhinestone cowboy on his current LP, pays tribute to Kris as a leader who opened Nashville's doors to other underground artists. "[Kris] snuck right by 'em. And the next thing you know he was being nominated for awards and worse, he was winning them. Then the truth came out when he appeared at the awards show wearing levis (heaven forbid). Nashville was in a tizzy. What had we done? Here was this goddam hippy, right in front for the world to see, staggering around, drunk as shit, insulting dignitaries with his uncouth mouth and setting a bad example for national television. Someone had really made a mistake this time." Coe's account (Picking Up the Tempo, July 1975) is vivid for it both shores up his personal outlaw identity, and shrewdly prods at the industry's real mistake--the inability to accept talented outsiders forging new Nashville sounds.

The conflict between established industry figures and rebels such as Willie Nelson or Waylon Jennings is not yet dissipated. Some of its tension was caught in a series of articles by Dave Hickey for Country Music. Hickey, a Texan from Fort Worth and a former graduate student at Austin with a good eye and ear for spurious standards, hit home with the scornful note that cowboy rebels were "just about the only folks in Nashville who will walk into a room where there's a guitar and a Wall Street Journal and pick up the guitar" (January 1974, p. 90).

However, during 1973 "cowboy" as a classificatory term was partially assimilated into official industry language. For Waylon Jennings' RCA album Honky Tonk Heroes, liner-note writer "Captain Midnight" Schutt declaimed: "Waylon Jennings and Billy Joe Shaver are the first of the last real cowboys. . . . It ain't easy

being a cowboy in this day and time." To some degree, it became "easy" for RCA and other major labels to assimilate new stars when fans purchased their records in great quantities. Schutt also expressed the hope that Billy Joe's fresh pieces might become the "Cool Water" and "Tumbling Tumbleweed" anthems of the jet-age cowboy. None of us knows which new songs will become popular classics, or, possibly, enter folk tradition, but our sense of the vitality in cowboy imagery tells us that some of these ballads and legends of the 1970s will persist.

"Cowboy" became a generic term for country music's tricksters and gypsies not only in Nashville, but also in Austin, Texas, between 1968-1974. Something of the history of Austin's exciting fusion of orthodox country and popular rock is told in Jan Reid's The Improbable Rise of Redneck Rock (1974). Reid, a newspaper sports writer, hails from a blue-collar, Church of Christ family in Wichita Falls, Texas. His journalistic senses have drawn him to the colorful styles of performing musicians rather than to their roles as cultural mediators. Previous to the book, Jan Reid and Don Roth had already collaborated on "The Coming of Redneck Hip," an article for Texas Monthly (November 1973), in which they identified Austin's trend-setting music as "country rock." Reid later switched to "redneck rock" for his book title, but the on-the-spot tag generally applied in Austin has been "progressive country."

It is not my intention here to do a capsule history of Austin music (Threadgill to Joplin to Nelson), but rather to sketch the setting in which many rednecks and rockers together began to portray themselves as cowboys in dress and in song. Hopefully, new books will be published on Texas music. At this juncture, I can report that a handful of keen observers have written excellent articles for local journals. Townsend Miller, Nick Spitzer, Joe Nick Patoski, Roxy Gordon, Joe Gracey, and Chet Flippo, to name a few, have appreciated Austin music and have treated it with affection.

On my visit to the University of Texas in 1968, Professor Roger Abrahams had alerted me to the usage "cowboy" among high school students who contrasted straight cowboy youngsters from poor, rural, patriotic families with long-haired hippies from well-to-do or urban backgrounds. Actually, parents of these young Austin cowboys in blue jeans had for decades been locally tagged as "cedar choppers," an old localism for Texas hill folk who worked as timber clearers, charcoal burners, and tie hackers, supplying railroad construction needs. Another Texas country expression parallel to "cedar chopper" was "goat roper," a combination designed to infuriate proud horsemen.

Schoolyard conflict between greasers and freaks, under many different labels, was especially strong throughout the United States in the 1960s and frequently was categorized by reference to musical or movie taste. I do not wish to imply that either the conflict or its naming is a thing of the past. In 1975 school authorities at Prince Georges County, Maryland, are concerned by student and dropout "grits," who borrow Kung Fu film techniques to fight "niggers" and "freaks." What is important about Austin--indeed almost mysterious--is that the late 1960s seemed to brink a local inversion in esthetics and nomenclature. Cedar choppers/cowboys/goat ropers enjoyed country music and western swing, while their antagonists lived by rock and roll and revival folksong. Yet, in time, rock freaks began to perceive themselves as cowboys. In their own code, "It became hip to be a hick." This did not happen in Prince Georges County, Nashville, Berkeley, or Manhattan, but deep in the heart of Texas. Why?

A dynamic process of change, not yet fully explained by musicologists, has constantly driven many American country musicians to reach out to blues, jazz, pop, and other types of exotic expression. Conversely, "uptown" musicians have reached "down" and "back" to rural or folk roots. In the late 1960s some Austin performers--native Texans or outsiders drawn to the open community--began to make an exciting meld of the sounds of Jimmie Rodgers and Bob Dylan, Bob Wills and Mick Jagger. This mix, of course, crossed lines of race, residence, and status. New sounds and styles demanded new linguistic usages.

Essentially, rednecks and cowboys extended their names and dress to Texas rock musicians returning home from both Coasts, as well as to thousands of college students who grooved and boogied to (Beatles-altered) rhythm and blues tunes. Hip musicians were drawn to the image of cowboy as outlaw or rebel breaking with Nashville and other established institutions. If the genuine (mythic) cowboy was a loner, perhaps he too could double as a cultural radical or displaced intellectual. Many college students at Austin in the 1960s swore by rock, but did not reject entirely Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys. Musicians, strong enough to feel comfortable with psychedelic light shows as well as with cinematic cowpokes riding down the canyon, helped young Austinites bridge past and present. In a sense, a University of Texas student at a Willie Nelson picnic could be loyal to parents and peers simultaneously. In collegiate terms it was fun to seek highs from traditional beer and innovative dope, as well as from music that spoke to both pleasures.

The song which emerged as the best semantic marker in this fusion of contradictory cultural modes was Michael Murphey's popular "Cosmic Cowboy," released in the summer of 1973 on the LP, *Cosmic Cowboy Souvenir*. Before something of its history is sketched, I shall offer a single flashback to Austin in the mid-1960s. Two dynamic white rock and roll bands (Thirteenth Floor Elevators, Conqueroo) had formed locally at that time. An Austin rocker, Bob Brown (a decade later) recalled the Conqueroo's performance in the 1 L, a run-down Negro bar. "It was the kind of place where older black people gathered in the afternoon to play dominoes. But here a bunch of cracker hippies marches down and starts playing so loud that food is flying off forks all over the neighborhood" (*Redneck Rock*, p. 34).

Brown's recollection is highly significant, I feel, because it caught the double incongruity of white youngsters performing in a conventional southern black setting, and rock and rollers (acid freaks) labeled with the old poor-white term "cracker." Bob Brown bridged the linguistic polarity built into then-discrete categorical sets of people, separated by color or esthetic taste. Both "cracker" and "hippy" were pejorative terms but they were seldom joined in every day speech during 1967. Interestingly, the 1 L's proprietor, Ira Littlefield, then advertised his club as featuring Austin's best beatnik bands, itself a compliment to his very wry sense of humor, or keen prescience in anticipating a cultural explosion on the horizon.

Doubtless, few country music enthusiasts will read as much meaning as I do into the isolated act of a Negro owner renting his Austin bar to a white rock group in the 1960s. Every Texas music historian finds a fresh symbol to mark the crossover phenomena. I view this 1 L Club happening as a tiny but iridescent chip in a panoramic mosaic--one now depicting starry cosmic cowboys, some riding ethereal broncos and others mounted on mystical little armadillos.

As I write this commentary (October 1975) in Austin, Michael Murphey's "Cosmic Cowboy" is no longer aired on radio and its composer has seemingly rejected his own creation. But his naming words linger to encompass cracker hippies, converted goat ropers, collegiate faddists, and folk-like musicians in levis.

Murphey, born in Dallas, had turned from Baptist orthodoxy to Albert Schweitzer, from a straight Hollywood Screen Gems songwriting job, to a free life as a composer/performer of complex rock poetry. While singing at the Bitter End in Greenwich Village during August 1972, he composed and presented "Cosmic Cowboy" to its first auditors. I know of no early statement on this song--one does not usually comment on a

piece until after it catches on with an audience. Murphey's first LP, Geronimo's Cadillac (1972), with a title song which dealt with white exploitation of Indian life and land, had been well received by folk, rock, and country fans alike. Hence, Nashville produced Bob Johnson, knowing Music City's grudging acceptance of the cowboy/outlaw figure, selected "Cosmic Cowboy" as the title number for Murphey's second LP, Cosmic Cowboy Souvenir. Murphey's desired album name had been "Souvenir" to cover the variety of his compositions. Johnston, and his associates, sensed "Cosmic Cowboy's" potential and added it to the LP title after the jacket's art work had been prepared.

Nashville music fans during 1973 perceived the word "cowboy" to cover primarily rebels or outlaws like Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson. Austin fans in the same year linked "cowboy" to long hair, dope, revival folksong, cliché-laden poetry, and pop astrology. Because Waylon and Willie's music was appreciated and purchased in Austin, and because these outlaws also accepted his style, a bridge was built spanning Nashville and Austin. Michael Murphey was one of this bridge's engineers. His "Cosmic Cowboy," which was recorded in Nashville and which caught on in Austin, helped pull a wide set of progressive country musicians and fans into one ambience.

The chronology of Murphey's song establishes the movement of his catchy title into general Austin speech. After composition at the Bitter End in New York, it was formally presented by Murphey to an Austin audience on 23-24 February 1973, at the Armadillo World Headquarters, a physical setting of great exuberance. On 16 March "Cosmic Cowboy" was copyrighted, and on 1 May the LP on which it appeared was also copyrighted. (I lack the actual date of its recording session for the A & M label.) The album was premiered by Murphey in a concert at the Armadillo on 29-30 June, and on 30 August it was reviewed in Rolling Stone. A year later "Cosmic Cowboy" was again recorded by the Nashville-based Nitty Gritty Dirt Band on Stars and Stripes Forever (LP copyright 10 July 1974).

I shall not offer the text of "Cosmic Cowboy" in this study because it is still available on two LPs. Instead, I shall assert that the song is not structured in any conventional ballad mold; rather, it nostalgically projects folkscene images away from Greenwich Village towards Texas--the land of cattle-in-mesquite and home-on-the-range. No one ever satisfactorily explains any hit in rational terms--alliterative title, catchy melody, instant humor, memorable poetry, symbol of an era. "Cosmic Cowboy" for a brief period was a country-rock favorite, yet when it dropped out of the charts its title still

remained in public consciousness as a generic tag, both ameliorative and pejorative.

Typical examples of "cosmic cowboy" as a deprecatory tag--a latter-day, psychedelic, drug-store cowboy--are cited here from three perceptive articles in the Texas Monthly. Larry King, Texas-born novelist and political essayist, who abhors romanticized rurality, states in "Redneck" (August 1974, p. 50):

Now, the Rednecks I'm talking about are not those counterfeit numbers who hang around Austin digging the Cosmic Cowboy scene, sucking up to Jerry Jeff Walker and Willie Nelson, wearing bleached color-patched overalls and rolling their own dope, saying how they hanker to go live off the land and then stay six weeks in a Taos commune before flying back on daddy's credit card.

William Martin, Rice University (Houston) sociologist, reports sourly on thirty-six hours of progressive country music in "Growing Old at Willie Nelson's Picnic" (October 1974, p. 94):

I had expected thousands of cosmic cowboys and assorted freaks, but I had also expected fairly large numbers of authentic rednecks, and I knew if I got uncomfortable with the freaks I could go sit with the kickers... There were some kickers there, all right. About six. The other 25,000 were freaks or freakish, all under 25.

Bill Porterfield also takes a gentle swipe at cosmic bretheren in a fine article, "In Search of the Modern Cowboy" (October 1975, p. 59.):

The new musical romanticism has [the cowboy as] a gentle knight, repulsed by arms and armor and aggression and refinery air, returning to a pastoral West... It is a curious hallucination. Cosmic cowboys around counterfeit campfires, breathing burning grass and drinking longnecks, listening to the lowing of Darrell Royal's Longhorns. Certainly the right setting for the crossbreeding of country and city strains, at long last consummated in music. It isn't bad, really, the rhinestone imitation.

The most direct put-down to Michael Murphey's song came from Doug Sahm, an eclectic San Antonio rocker who handles blues, cajun, and conjunto music with equal facility. In October 1973, after his Texas Tornado LP appeared, Sahm declared that the cowboy music era ended: "This cosmic cowboy shit has had it." (Rolling Stone, 6 Dec.

p. 30). What had gone wrong? Why had a rather mild and opaque portrait of a spaced-out cowboy, a folky rider from outer space, become such a negative symbol? Part of the answer to this rhetorical question lies within Murphey's song, and part in the Austin scene. On first hearing Murphey's lyric, I was uncertain whether he intended his cowboy to be a hero or anti-hero, redneck kicker or liberated philosopher. Murphey, too, may have been uncertain. Despite the ambivalent nature of the song the word "cowboy" whether linked with "cosmic" or standing alone has fantastic strength in that it holds multiple images in bond: guerrilla, buckaroo, wrangler, stoic, dude, braggart, hustler, rebel, mystic.

Although it seems clear to me that Murphey composed his song seriously, intended it to be relevant to a wide audience, and recorded it without a hint at parody, he backed away from it as soon as it became a subject of ridicule. In hindsight he told Jan Reid that "he had written the song tongue-in-cheek, never intending it to be taken seriously." Further, he came to despise his Austin fans as "hooting hippies who fancied themselves goat-roping cosmic cowboys" (p. 264). When Reid or his publisher selected a color photo of Murphey for the dust wrapper of *Redneck Rock*, the latter was so distressed at the association with this alliterative title that he threatened to sue. I do not convey these details to gossip. As a country fan of long pedigree I am interested in tracing this music's development, and as a folklorist I am concerned with the web of language and legend which surrounds song and songmaker.

In the best short article available on Austin music, "Hill Country Sound" (*Texas Parade*, April 1974), Murphey told Chet Flipppo about "Cosmic Cowboy" being misunderstood:

I never intended that it be taken seriously. I wrote that one night at the Bitter End in New York. Jerry Jeff and I were there, playing cowboy in New York, and I just kinda made it up and sang it that night as a joke. We cracked up--look at us, we're the cosmic cowboys. It was a light-hearted song. What is a cosmic cowboy after all? It gets under my skin a little bit. Somehow that phrase caught on and people said, yeah, that's what we are and they started wearing boots and huge cowboy hats. It went too far. It's fun to have fun but we came off as Clint Eastwood all the time, Clint Eastwood with hair.

To dispute, retrospectively, whether or not "Cosmic Cowboy" was intended as a joke is futile. Murphey's title did catch on! His song helped label a cultural amalgam that had been building for decades. Cedar chopping/goat roping youngsters in the Texas hill country were

born into western life codes. They may have been pained when hippy school rivals took up their levis and music, but it was also a rural conquest, a vindication of good horse sense in manly wear.

Not all rock fans at Texas colleges in the 1960s were "freaks," by any definition of that embracing word. Many well-to-do students at the University were directly out of ranch life or but a generation or two removed. John Lomax had labored in Austin itself more than a half-century ago to help Texans appreciate their frontier roots. Before Michael Murphey ever sang at the Armadillo, Kris Kristofferson's discs had reached Austinites who were ready for a rock philosopher in shaggy denim. And long before any cracker hippies rocked in Austin black bars, Jimmie Rodgers, a white Mississippi railroad boomer, had pulled together Anglo and Afro expression. In Rodgers' Kerrville mansion, near Austin, the singing brakeman had also donned a Stetson and play-acted as a cowboy. There is no way to appreciate the acceptance of "cosmic cowboy," the label, without knowing the previous ground plowed by ballad scholars and recording artists alike.

Murphey must be credited with projecting a marvelous phrase into the American language, but not with teaching Austin hippies to wear cowboy hats or boots. Not only was his title euphonic--pleasing to the ear--but the parallel in "cosmetic" and "cosmic" served to help the former term cover the incongruity of well-to-do youngsters in cowboy "make-up."

A few details remain to round out my account of cosmic cowboys. As part of the direct scene within which Murphey's catchy title caught on, many of us were readied for his word picture by Steve Miller's rock-blues composition of 1969 "Space Cowboy," followed late in 1971 by Sly and the Family Stones' "Spaced Cowboy." Sly, Miller, and Murphey, of course, were all performing for audiences growing up in post-Sputnik America. Some saw cosmic life as a series of TV *Star Trek* dramas, while others related cosmic creeds to the revival of astrological belief by counter-culture converts. Before and after Murphey wrote his piece, dozens of other songs were copyrighted adding the word "cosmic" to "boy," "Charlie," "chicken," "dancer," "debris," "funk," "overload," "ray," "street," "vortex," "wheels." But none of these combinations had any impact comparable to "Cosmic Cowboy." None served to specify a need.

After a new phrase catches hold widely, one can discover linguistic parents and relatives. The first printing known to me of any general circulation for "cosmic cowboy" as a discrete word combination was the Armadillo World Headquarters poster (23-24 February 1973), reproduced in this

Graphics feature. The shift from poster to naming tag was immediate. In March, Al Reinert's article appeared in the *Texas Monthly*, "So Long, Cosmic Cowboys," which dealt not with music, but rather with the Houston-based space program. Reinert's prose was colorful: "Astronauts, tight-lipped, square-jawed and blue-eyed, dedicated patriots... a species of Cosmic Cowboys storing up energy to blaze a trail to the moon."

I judge Reinert's borrowing to be complimentary to Murphey's coinage. But, during the early summer of 1973 "cosmic Cowboy" began to bother a number of Austin fans. John Clay, a dedicated performer of old-time folksong, composed a long and clever parody, "Plastic Plowboy," also titled "drifting Thru the Seventies." The text was printed in *The Rag*, Austin's radical newspaper (4 September). A song less pungent than Clay's was composed by David Hisbrook and pressed on a 45 rpm disc, "Too Much Cosmic (Not Enough Cowboy)" (United Recording Artist 921). Two years after Murphey's song caught on, the *Austin Sun*, an alternative community paper (May 1975), printed T. Gosney Thornton's (The Rambling Redneck) "Long Haired Country Boy." It opened, "I don't understand the meanin' of this Cosmic Cowboy fad," but moved quickly from a questioning stance to one of aggression in which Thornton threatened to go "round and round" with city slickers.

By far the most pungent criticism of cosmic cowboyism as a social phenomenon was written by editor Jeffrey Nightbyrd for the *Austin Sun* (3 April 1975). In "Cosmo Cowboy" he was careful to distinguish between Murphey, the sensitive creator, and his song which had come to personify the collegiate "nerds" (embroidered cowboy shirts and simulated alligator boots) despised by Nightbyrd. Hopefully, this article will be expanded, or, at least, reprinted for a wide audience. Editor Nightbyrd has been unable to forget Austin cowboys trashing hippies or the stench and litter at Willie Nelson's cosmic picnics. Behind his article, as well as the compositions of Clay, Hisbrook, and Thornton stand at least four articulated positions. Folksong purists felt that Murphey was distorting folk culture; radical activists felt that his song exploited the people; country music fans resented a derogatory image; political conservatives did not cotton to the implication that freak and redneck values might coexist.

Elsewhere I have written on the combination "hillbilly music" and the needs it served. Peter Tamony has dealt beautifully with "jazz" the word. I do not anticipate that the label "cosmic cowboy" will have a long life in country music, but I do believe that all of us shall continue to seek tags to describe the convergence of rural and urban, black and white, straight and weird style in America.

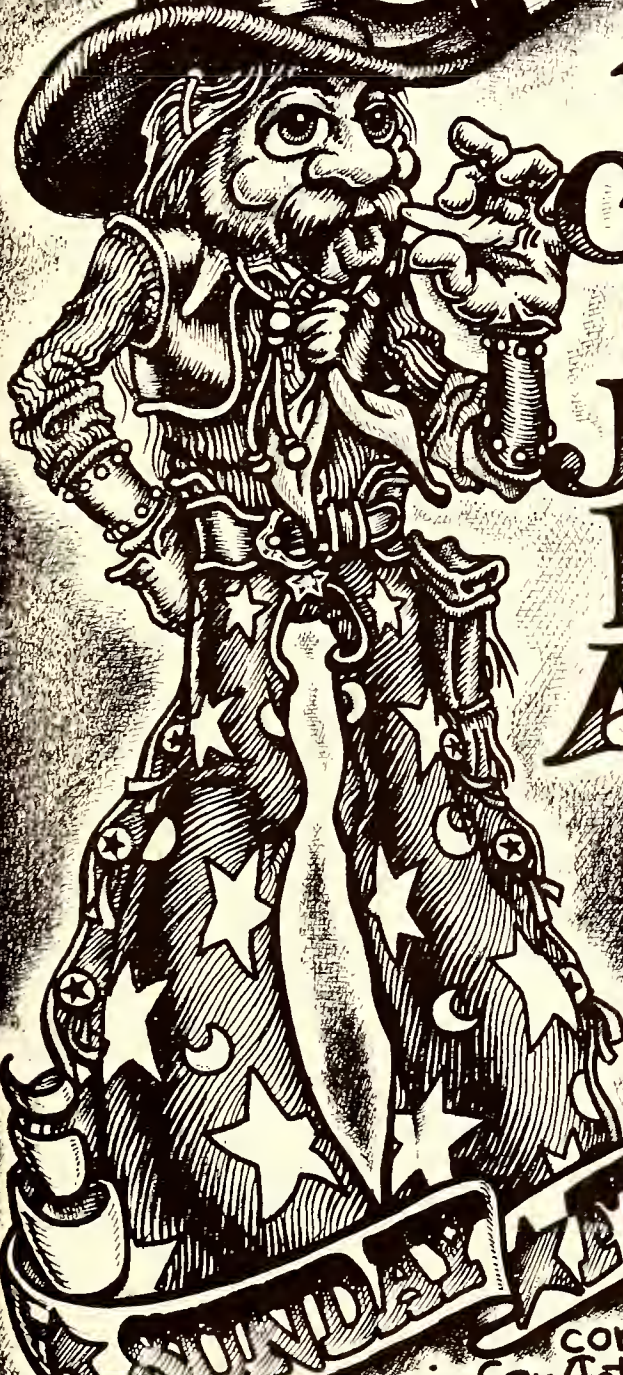
Three Austin cowboy graphics by Michael Priest are reproduced here in exact size to extend the meaning of Professor Worrall's carousing cowboys, 1874, and Tad Dorgan's drugstore cowboys, 1923. I wish at this point to offer a personal note of thanks to Priest for a rewarding interview in his studio (8 October 1975), and his extreme generosity in presenting me with a number of his humorous concert posters. Priest, a self-educated young artist, came to Austin in 1969 and was caught up immediately by the "laid-back" relaxed community. By 1971 he was trying his hand at commercial work for the Armadillo World Headquarters and other musical clubs. The major artist associated with Austin music and the Armadillo is Jim Franklin, who richly deserves a full anthology. Here, I shall not focus on Franklin's droll armadillos, but rather on Priest's sardonic cowboys.

For a concert on 15-16 September 1972, well before "Cosmic Cowboy" was composed, Priest portrayed Willie Nelson and Michael Murphey as two very relaxed cowboy musicians. In this commentary I have not detailed any of Nelson's fabulous story, for it is told by others. By any measure he is a superior country musician, whether one sees him as a soulful or down-home entertainer. Many of his LPs are available; his travels from Texas to Tennessee and back to Texas form a rich saga. Nelson's picnics in the 1970s have helped nationalize progressive country music. It is my suggestion that Priest's linking of Murphey and Nelson as two tipsy comrades, arm-in-arm, anticipated the need for a linguistic tag or visual emblem to say that straights and freaks could ramble together.

I quizzed Priest on this usage of the cowboy costume as a combining symbol, and he indicated that his choice was conscious. Priest, a southern poor boy (Alabama born), had come to Austin by way of small-town Texas and knew the word "cowboy" as a derogatory equivalent for "cedar chopper" and "goat roper." Because he liked "kicker" music but lived mainly within the liberated Austin community, he desired to bring his dual worlds together. In short, Priest had not foreseen Murphey's specific song, but had already observed the mixing of styles and welcomed this convergence. Priest was ready to draw a mustang-rider-in-space as soon as Murphey was ready to introduce "Cosmic Cowboy" to Austin. A tiny detail from this poster is important historically for it credits Stan Alexander as being "The Original Cosmic Cowboy." Professor Alexander at North Texas State University, had first introduced young Murphey to traditional and revival folksong in the early 1960s.

The third Priest poster, which I have selected from his portfolio, advertises "A Tribute to the Cosmic Cowboy," a benefit concert, 10 February 1974, for Houston's non-commercial

1st presents
TRIBUTE TO THE COSMIC COWBOYS



featuring
Willie Nelson
Commander Cody and **Lost Planet Airmen**
John Prine
Kinky Friedman AND THE TEXAS JEWBOYS
Asleep at the Wheel

SPECIAL GUEST EMCEES:
HUEY P. MEAUX,
JIM FRANKLIN,
and
DON SANDERS

OTHER ACTS TO BE ANNOUNCED

2PM
until
when
over

HOUSTON
Pavillion HOUSTON

\$4.00 \$5.00 \$6.00

tickets available in Houston at Tootzies,
Mr. Fantasy, Groove Record Shop & Disc Re-
cords, Galleria in Northwest Mall & Alameda Mall,
in San Antonio at Mr. Natural Uptown, in Austin at Oat Willies.

FM station, KPFT. This Pacifica Foundation station had suffered for years from fire bombings and deficits before it imported a group of Austin-based progressive country musicians to give KPFT a new lease on life. For this happening, Michael Priest outdid himself with a poster cowboy, stars on chaps and fat joint in hand. This little cosmic cowboy was later given life beyond his poster birth, when Lone Star beer emblazoned him on a Texas tee-shirt. Chet Flippo reported on the Houston concert for *Rolling Stone*: "The Day the Kickers Ruled" (11 April 1974). Flippo noted that the concert included, among others, Michael Murphey and some 8000 fans in cowboy hats and boots. "Big doggin'-heel jobs caked with the remains of dusty trails and cowflop-clearings. Between the headgear and footwear, a snappy parade of cowboy shirts and pants floated by." Fortunately, *Rolling Stone* included two KPFT benefit photos of Armadillo artist Jim Franklin and rocker Doug Sahm in their respective Stetsons.

It has been part of my thesis that cowboys never were given entirely to white or black hats, despite Dodge Boys' television commercials in the 1960s. Precisely because Americans wanted folk heroes who were both orderly lawmen and disorderly brawlers, an elastic word was stretched to its limits. It is easy to find portraits of cowboys within discrete ethical frames; it is more difficult to find portraits of cowboys caught between sets of alternate values.

One of the fascinating aspects of Michael Murphey's song was that it helped many Austinites deal with their liminality--their life in the doorway, neither in nor out of home. *The Rag* (18 February 1974) carried a fine reflective review of KPFT's benefit concert. In "The Cosmic Kowboys" reviewer Danny confessed that previously he had been unimpressed by cosmic cowboys (time wasters, bullshit thoughts) but he had come over at the crazy concert when everybody joined Murphey in his chorus line, "I just want to be a cosmic cowboy." Danny noted, "Everyone onstage was swapping hats. Doug Sahm had come back out and was dancing around Jim Franklin, who wore possibly the biggest white Stetson this side of the moon. I must've sung along too, the whole thing felt that good. The image finally made sense."

Danny was conscious that the cosmic cowboy portrait of hip Texans was full of contradictions (long hair and longhorns), and that this new country-rock colony did not include Blacks or Chicanos. Finally, Danny faulted cosmic cowboyism for its return to male machismo. Critically, Danny rejected the false values in Murphey's construct, but at the concert Danny, too, confessed being caught up by song and dance. Intellectuals and radicals who live outside also need to come inside, to swap hats, to sing along.

It will be obvious to JEMFQ readers that I have been concerned with cowboy music and imagery for many years. In my first weeks at the University of Texas I have been overwhelmed by Austin's cornucopia of progressive country music and by its FM station KOKE (the subject of a future Graphics report). Two recent concerts tell me that cowboy dress and song still function powerfully to entertain, as well as to explicate ethical issues. Kinky Friedman, The Texas Jewboy, and David Allan Coe, The Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy, both personify modern musical artists posing as cowboys, yet fully understanding the diverse roles in their performances and poetry.

Kinky does not label himself a "cosmic cowboy" but he deliberately juxtaposes cedar chopper and freak values in his compositions. In western garb, he is an irreverent practitioner of guerrilla theater. His painful social commentaries ("They Don't Make Jews Like Jesus Anymore"), for example, invoke the searing moral conflict of modern times, while his concert choreography recalls the high drama of cowboys on a trail's end spree. To see his stage prop Star of David used as a hat rack for a Stetson is to be outraged.

Nashville, to a degree, has learned to accommodate to some Austin progressive country music, but Kinky continues to push beyond both sites to extraordinary limits. "Sold American" delineates a faded cowboy star whose sequins have fallen from his jeans, but he is not just a country music has-been; he is everyman--fleeced, flawed, fallen. "Ride 'Em Jewboy" employs the waltz-like lilt of a traditional cowboy night-herding song, but its biting message touches the scourge of fascism. At a recent Austin concern (Armadillo World Headquarters, 20 September) this song moved some of its auditors to dreamy dancing, and others to troubled introspection, yet Kinky, in chaps, held the wide audience together.

Early in my commentary, I quoted David Allan Coe's re-telling of Kris Kristofferson's reception of a TV award. Here, an appreciative note is offered on Coe's recent evening in an Austin club (Castle Creek, 7 October), literally in the shadow of the pink granite Texas capitol building. Many Austin cowboys simply wear levis; Coe transformed himself into an outlandish super-dude--dramatic, intense, powerful. In his concert format he ran some thirty pieces together into a continuous extended ballad, while his side-men skillfully tied narrative episodes to moody lyric fragments. Some of Coe's compositions arise out of personal prison experience, and some out of troubled love, but these themes are not his exclusively. Coe's biting, memorable songs deal with the sometime violent encounters of rednecks kicking hippy asses, and of kickers turning against each other. Coe has taken Roy Wiley Hubbard's ludicrous "Up Against the Wall Redneck," and transformed it into a happening as shocking as the



A TEXAN RANGER.

WE publish above a sketch, by one of our most reliable artists, of a TEXAN RANGER. A gentleman, just from Richmond, gave the following account of these redoubtable warriors :

Ben M'Cullough's Texan Rangers are described as a desperate set of fellows. They number one thousand half savages, each of whom is mounted upon a mustang horse. Each is armed with a pair of Colt's navy revolvers, a rifle, a tomahawk, a Texan bowie-knife, and a lasso. They are described as being very dexterous in the use of the latter.

HARPER'S WEEKLY — July 6, 1861



a DEXTEROUS New
Voice in Country
Music
from the
HALF-SAVAGE
SOUTHWEST

murderous death of the motorcycle heroes in Easy Rider.

For many years Nashville composers have beamed countless cloying or banal songs at America's rural poor. Understandably, a Tom Joad or a Flem Snopes became a social object--a recipient of packaged country-music sentiment. But David Allen Coe, a Nashville rebel, has been able to make a redneck the sympathetic subject of his songs. Essentially, I hear Coe as being closer to Joad than to Snopes, but not hostile to the latter. And this is a real achievement within an industry geared to selling emotions and ideology in capsule discs.

It is my thesis that David Allan Coe, Kinky Friedman, and their fellow composer/performers are superb artists by virtue of balancing extremes of cloying sentiment and frightening dissonance, by balancing much of the urban-rural tension built into modern American life. I treasure this release of tension by goat ropers and liberated freaks, by superkickers and isolated intellectuals, much more than I fret about the sham of romantic rednecks. In short, I lack anxiety over rhinestone-decorated cosmic cowboys. I am sensitive to cosmetic portraits and plastic packaging, but I am also deeply concerned over a fragmented polity. Is there any way to pull American society together if disparate cultural expression cannot be shared?

To end my commentary, I have reproduced a full page advertisement from the tabloid-sized newspaper Picking Up the Tempo (July 1975). This tabloid, edited and produced by Roxy and July Gordon in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was first issued in November 1964. (As I write, its eleventh issue, for October 1975, has appeared.) The paper's title comes from a recent Willie Nelson song; PUTT identified itself as both a country-western journal and a voice from the half-savage southwest. Editor Gordon, far

more literate and liberated than many country-music journalists, is a William Faulkner fan and Civil War buff. Albuquerque seems unlikely to topple Nashville, but, I for one, wish Picking Up the Tempo a long and lusty life. Its style is sprightly--toned down Rolling Stone--its reporters seem uniformly intelligent, and the paper is not hung up on toadyism.

The selection by Roxy Gordon of a satiric cut from Harpers' Weekly (6 July 1861) to plug his new journal seems especially apt to me. Gordon hails from West Texas country, and has been touched by the counter-culture movement of the 1960s. He is fully conscious of his "free" status as one who has both "jumped off" and been "flung off" his ancestral ranch. Because Roxy places himself both inside and outside the country, and its music, he feels comfortable with a century-old sketch which caricatures heroic Texas Rangers.

Historically, in 1861, cowboys were caught between their stance of longhorn rustlers and hard-working drivers and herdsmen. Some cowboys became Texas Rangers, and in turn other cowboys were hunted by them. I am pulled into the ambit of Harper's half-savage lawman because I see him as a cowboy/western symbol--more ridiculous than orderly, more comic than mythic. Harper's rider, recycled by Gordon, stands behind Waylon Jennings and Kinky Friedman, Kris Kristofferson and David Allan Coe. This bearded buckaroo, advertising a country music paper, tells us that the leather- or denim-clad western hero on horseback has always carried his own seeds of anti-heroism. The cowboy has been and continue to be a plains rider and music hall performer--a dweller in old bunkhouse and new rodeo-motel doorways. Kris, Waylon, Kinky, and David remind us that the cowboy is a trickster, dandy, drugstore dude, rhinestone wearer, cosmic visitor, midnight wastrel, and country star.

-- University of Texas,
Austin, Texas

ERRATA

In last issue's Graphics article, "A Resettlement Administration Song Sheet," a line was inadvertently omitted, resulting in the complete garbling of two sentences. In the second column of p. 80, the second and third complete sentences should read:

His sardonic "Farmer Is the Man That Feeds Them All" (OKeh 40071) was recently reissued on an LP, Fiddlin' John Carson (Rounder 1003). Inasmuch as Carl Sandburg was born in 1878 and Fiddlin' John Carson in 1868, it is likely that the Georgia mountain fiddler learned this populist song at least as early as did the Illinois poet.

It should also have been made clear that the songsheet reproduced on pp. 85-86 was physically distinct from the RA pamphlet the title page of which was reproduced on p. 85.

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- _____. +Mr. Frank Walker's Strathspey. Edinburgh: Gow & Shepherd Music Sellers (n.d.). *Also 4 other tunes: "Captain Fleming", "Le Permgordien", "Murphy Delaney", "Lady Caroline Lee's Waltz".*
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- _____. +"Nashville Cats: Bluegrass Style, Bobby Thompson and Buddy Spicher." MN 5 no. 2 (Feb. 1974) 6-7, 25. *Interview by Green.*
- _____. +"Roy Acuff: Reflections on a Life in Country Music." MN 5 no. 8 (Aug. 1974) 16-25. *From interviews with Green, with photos.*
- GREENE, CLARENCE H., JR. +"Fiddling Clarence Greene: Mountain Musician." JEMFQ 7 part 4 no. 24 (Winter 1974) 163-170. *Biography, discography, photos.*
- _____. +"Pee Wee Davis: His Own Story." 8U 6 no. 8 (Feb. 1972) 12-15. *Good, short biography, discography.*
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- _____. +"The Harding Fiddle." Studia Musicologica Norvegica, vol. 1, 1968, pp. 10-19. *History and development of instrument.*
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- _____. The Musician's Companion. Three parts. Boston: Elias Howe, Jr., 1844; Oliver Ditson, 1850.
- _____. Howe's School for the Violin. Boston: Oliver Ditson, 1851.
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- 4 no. 2 (Summer 1954) Randolph, Vance. "The Names of Ozark Fiddle Tunes."
 10 no. 1 (Spring 1960) Linneman, William R. "Opie Read and the Arkansaw Traveler: The Trials of a Regional Humor Magazine."

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- 6 no. 3 (Autumn 1950) Welch, Catherine. "Northeastern and Western Square Dances."
 8 no. 3 (Autumn 1952) Osborn, Lettie. "Fiddle-Tunes from Orange County, New York."
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11. RECORD NOTES

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- FAUROT, CHARLIE. +Virginia Breakdown. County 705. *Short notes on Southeast fiddling, and the fiddlers: Otis Burris, Sonny Miller and Buddy Pendleton.*
- FELDMAN, PETER. +How to Play Country Fiddle. Sonyatone ST1-101. *Recording with instruction booklet.*
- FOSTER, ALICE. +Kenny Baker: Portrait of a Bluegrass Fiddler. County 719. *Notes on Baker and tunes, taken from interviews 1968, 1969.*
- IVEY, WILLIAM. +The Bob Wills Anthology. Columbia KG 32416. *Notes on Wills, recording information on selections, 1935-1946.*
- A Jam Session With Benny and Jerry Thomasson. *Short biography, tune notes. Recorded 1972.*
- LEADER, BILL. +The Irish Pipes of Finbar Furey. Nonesuch Explorer Series H-72048. *Notes on Uilleann piper Furey and tunes.*
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- _____. +Down to the Cider Mill. *Notes on the performers: Fred Cockerham, Tommy Jarrell and Oscar Jenkins; and the tunes, recorded ca. 1968.*
- _____. +Old-Time Fiddle Classics Volume 2: Original Recordings 1927-1934. County 527. *Notes on performers and tunes.*
- _____. +The Riendeau Family: Old Time Fiddling from Old New England. County 725. *Notes on the musicians and tunes of this French-Canadian family from New Hampshire.*
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- OSTER, HARRY. +Folksongs of the Louisiana Acadians, Volume 2. Arhoolie 5015. *Short history of the Cajuns, and comments on current musical traditions.*
- PANCERZEWSKI, JOE. +Joe Pancerzewski: The Fiddling Engineer. Voyager VRLP 3065. *Short biographic and tune notes on this Canadian-style fiddler from Washington state.*
- RINZLER, RALPH. +The Dillards: Pickin' and Fiddlin' with Byron Berline. Elektra EKS-7285. *Short notes on Berline and the tunes.*
- THE ROUNDER COLLECTIVE. +Clark Kessinger: Old Time Fiddler. Booklet accompanying Clark Kessinger: Old Time Music with Fiddle and Guitar. Rounder 0004. *Interview, discography accompany 1971 recordings.*
- _____. +The Recordings of Blind Alfred Reed. Accompanies How Can A Poor Man Stand Such Times and Live?: The Songs of Blind Alfred Reed. Rounder 1001. *Background on Reed originally published in JEMFO 7, part 3, no. 23 (Autumn 1971) 113-115.*
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III. EPHEMERAL ENTRIES

- COOLEN, MIKE. "A Fiddler and Instruments." SFSJ 4 no. 2 (June 1973) 9. *Alvin Sanderson, fiddler and repairman.*
- LAMB, DAVID and MARY. "National Old Time Fiddle Contest Weiser, Idaho, June 1971." SFSJ 3 no. 1 (Sept. 1971) 12-13. *Photos, no text or identification.*
- McMICHAEL, DARREL. "How to Play the 5-String Banjo in One Not So Easy Lesson." SFSJ 4 no. 3 (March 1973) 20-25. *Partial reprint from Banjo without a Master by Frank Converse including music and dialogue for the "Arkansas Traveler".*

IV. ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Add to MAIN ENTRIES:

- BAYARD, SAMUEL P. "American Folksongs and their Music." SFQ 17 no. 2 (June 1953) 122-139. *Broad, general discussion; no musical examples.*
- BJØRNDAL, ARNE and BRYNJULF ALVER. Og Fela Ho Let: Norsk Spelemannstradisjon. Bergen-Oslo-Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1966. *History, development and music of Harding fiddle. Transcriptions and illustrations. English summary.*
- BUCHANAN, ANNABEL MORRIS. "A Neutral Mode in Anglo-American Folk Music." SFQ 4 no. 2 (June 1940) 77-92. *Musical analysis; some dance tune examples.*
- BULL, OLE. Violin Instruction Book; A Complete School for the Violin. Boston: Oliver Ditson, 1845. *Contains 75 marches, quick-steps, jigs, etc., also Scotch and "Ethiopian" melodies.*

Add to LISTING BY PERIODICAL:

SEATTLE FOLKLORE SOCIETY JOURNAL

- 4 no. 2 (June 1973) Coolen, Mike. "A Fiddler and His Instrument."
- Johnston, Neil. "Folk Fiddling Part I: Which Direction--Preservation or Development?"

DISC COLLECTOR

- No. 23 (Jan. 1966) Schlappi, Elizabeth. "Roy Acuff and his Smokey Mountain Boys Discography."

V. CHECKLIST OF SOURCES

KENTUCKY FOLKLORE RECORD (KFR)

- Vol. 1 no. 1 (Jan.-March 1955)-- Vol. 21 no. 1 (Jan.-March 1975)

MIDWEST FOLKLORE (MF)

- Vol. 1 no. 1 (April 1951) -- Vol. 13 no. 4 (Winter 1963-64)

NEW YORK FOLKLORE QUARTERLY (NYFQ)

- Vol. 1 no. 1 (Feb. 1945) -- Vol. 30 no. 4 (Dec. 1975)

SOUTHERN FOLKLORE QUARTERLY (SFQ)

- Vol. 1 no. 1 (March 1937) -- Vol. 36 no. 4 (Dec. 1972)

This concludes the second installment of Michael Mendelson's continuing bibliography of fiddling and fiddle music in North America. An asterisk () indicates that the item is in the JEMF archives; a cross (+), that the entry has been seen and confirmed by the compiler. For further information on the format and principles of arrangement, see the preceding installment in JEMFQ #38 (Summer 1975), pp 104-111.*

BOOK REVIEWS

OLD AS THE HILLS, by Steven D. Price (New York: The Viking Press, 1975) 110 + xi pp.; text, photos, appendix; \$7.95.

Old As the Hills is a brief popular introduction to bluegrass music. In his preface the author, Steven D. Price, disclaims any attempt at completeness, explaining that this "is by no means an exhaustive study" and that "the definitive history of Bluegrass has yet to be written ..." Accordingly he has opted for what he terms "a chronological approach ..." which will place the music and its major practitioners and innovators in a historical and social context.

The first quarter of Old As the Hills is devoted to the musical antecedents of bluegrass in the Appalachian region, and the forces which created the style. These first chapters present a brief overview of musical process in the southern mountain region over a two-century span. In general the portrait is informative, but here as elsewhere in the book, Price demonstrates a lack of knowledge about recent research. Thus, the rise of professional musicianship in the region is tied to the growth of radio stations and the involvement of the record industry, when in fact recent studies, especially those of Charles Wolfe, have reinforced Wilgus' finding that radio and records took over existing patterns of professionalism (eventually altering them), rather than creating a whole new structure of professionalism.

The remaining portions of Old As the Hills deal with bluegrass music, beginning with a chapter on Bill Monroe. In spite of the "chronological approach" this and the following chapters are marred by a good many errors of fact. Many could have been avoided if the author had taken the time to acquaint himself with the available literature on the subject. For example, we are given to understand that Bill Monroe did not begin to play the mandolin until 1932 (1920 would be closer); and "The mandolin had hitherto been used to produce either chorded rhythms or plinky Italianate melodies" which ignores the many recorded examples of blues and ragtime mandolin in the twenties and thirties.

Often, diverse facts are forced into strange molds, as when Price says "At RCA's suggestion, Monroe had experimented briefly with an accordion and an electric guitar but later rejected them." Actually Monroe had many instruments not now considered bluegrass instruments in his band during the forties, including the accordion which appeared on the recordings made for a Columbia session in 1945; and it was Decca's suggestion in 1951 that he record with an electric guitar. We are told also that Monroe and band wore string-ties which, as far as I know, they never did; and that the moment the folk revivalists discovered bluegrass they began to invite Monroe to festivals, which is not right either since Flatt and Scruggs, the Stanley Brothers, the Osborne Brothers and the Country Gentlemen were already veterans of the folk festival/coffee house/college concert circuit by the time Monroe first appeared before such a crowd in 1963. Here as elsewhere in the book the messy history is relieved by interesting first-person anecdotes told by former musicians, but these do little to bolster the often shaky chronology.

The same sort of muddy picture emerges with the next chapter, on Flatt and Scruggs. The story of Scruggs' hiring by Monroe does not jibe with Monroe's account as given in a recent interview, nor does it fit other earlier versions of the hiring story. Actually, the more important the musician, the more versions of the hiring story there will be -- and one wonders why such a brief book wastes space on one of many stories. Moreover, Monroe hired Flatt before he hired Scruggs, while Price has reversed the sequence. Scruggs' October 1955 auto accident is said to have "kept Scruggs off stage for approximately a year and a half" -- it was more like six weeks -- and to be the cause of hiring dobro player Buck Graves, when in fact Graves had joined the band before Scruggs' accident.

Later chapters continue in a similar vein -- we are told the Osborne Brothers "went modern" in 1967, when in reality the process he describes (applying to their recordings only, for the most part) took place gradually from 1965 on, and did not result in their "going electric" until 1969. Later, a sub-chapter on the Country Gentlemen consistently misspells John Duffey's name as "Duffy". To list all the errors, large and small, would result in a review longer than is commensurate with the size and importance of the work. While Price has disavowed exhaustiveness and definitiveness at the outset, this is no excuse for sloppiness.

A chapter on three "pickers" includes interesting thumb-nail sketches of Vic Jordan, Ricky Scaggs, and Roger Sprung. Anecdotal and brief, these are the most interesting part of the book for this reader. Again one wishes the author had been a bit more critical in his research; Roger

Sprung is quoted as learning "She's My Little Georgia Rose" from a Flatt and Scruggs 78 when the only 78 recording of the song was by Bill Monroe. But it is useful to have the Skaggs and Sprung material, since they are unique interviews with important musicians (the Jordan article comes for the most part from a previously published article in *Pickin'*). A final chapter discusses the state of the music today, giving a very brief look at festivals and the foreign interest in bluegrass.

Following this is an appendix with reading and listening suggestions. While these are useful as far as they go, it is a shame that they do not include any mention of the serious serial publications in the field -- *JEMF Quarterly* and the *Country Music Journal*. There is no index, which means the book will be difficult to use as a reference tool. The twenty-four photographs include a number which have documentary value, especially those from the Sprung collection. Their value would have been enhanced with more accurate captions, however.

In summary, this is a brief, popular book which, at the price of \$7.95, does not seem to me to be much of a bargain. The author, in attempting a brief introduction to the musical style, gives us a mountain version of the "Louis came up the river to Chicago" kind of musical history which was so common in jazz history several decades ago, in which "facts" (some accurate, too many not) are woven into a simplistic description of musical process.

-- Neil V. Rosenberg
Memorial University
St. Johns, Newfoundland

AMERICAN LABOR SONGS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, By Philip S. Foner (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975), xvii + 357 pp., facsimile reproductions, indexes, soundsheet; \$13.95.

Sound recordings are a product only of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries; yet it takes a most severely restricted view of recorded American folk- and folk-derived music not to recognize that the recorded tradition of that period is firmly built on the published tradition of the earlier decades. Sheet music, the primary medium of distribution of songs before phonograph records, has been documented at least superficially by music historians such as Sigmund Spaeth and David Ewen; yet nothing like a complete catalog exists anywhere. The files of the Copyright Office are the closest we have to a full accounting, but they are not readily accessible and furthermore are not complete. The area of cheap print, embracing principally broadsides and songsters, is considerably more recondite. A few important bibliographic publications have appeared (one of the most useful is Wolf's *American Song Sheets, Slip Ballads and Peotical Broadsides, 1850-1870*, a catalog of the collection of the Library Company of Philadelphia), and several libraries -- Philadelphia, Harvard, UCLA -- have significant broadside collections, but it is difficult to imagine that anything approaching a complete catalog could be compiled today. The status of songsters, small booklets, often "pocket size," is worse. I know of only two libraries -- the Library of Congress and UCLA, with extensive songster collections the contents of which are catalogued. But ill-documented as these media are, they are models of organization compared with another vast source of American folksongs from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: daily, weekly, and monthly newspapers and magazines. I have no idea how many metropolitan, suburban, or rural newspapers -- not to mention cattlemen's journals, miners' publications, railroad brotherhood journals, etc. -- published songs or poems or columns devoted to songs and poems. Surely the number runs in the dozens, and I would not be surprised if it ran into the hundreds. There is a veritable fortune in folklore waiting to be re-collected there.

In their day, several early folklorists were aware of the opportunities offered by newspapers and magazines. John A. Lomax clipped material from many western newspapers, and for a period was somehow involved in the writing of the regular song column, "Fiddler Joe's Corral," which appeared in Street and Smith's *Wild West Weekly*. Phillips Barry tried valiantly to use the "Notes and Queries" column of the *Boston Evening Transcript* for gathering ballad texts in the early years of this century, but often to no avail. I found frequent requests, signed only by "P. B.," asking readers if they knew the words to the old ballad so-and-so, only to be answered by a curt editor's note that such a song could be located in the collection of Francis J. Child. Doubtless the most successful folklorist of that period in using cheap print was Robert W. Gordon, who gathered thousands of song texts from correspondents all across the country during the years that he conducted the column, "Old Songs Men Have Sung" in *Adventure* magazine. In recent years, several song collectors, myself among them, who have used the pages of *Good Old Days* and the now-defunct *Old Time Songs and Poems* to gather material.

Philip S. Foner, whose previous publications already constitute a significant library in the area of labor history, now presents us with a harvest of over 550 songs and poems taken principally from the labor press (mostly English, but some German and Yiddish sources as well) of the nineteenth century. That most of the songs are not now folksongs and may never have been should not detract

in the least from their value in offering another means of documenting the history of the labor movement in America and the role of Music in American Life--the series title under which this volume is published.

The material is arranged partly chronologically and partly thematically. Notwithstanding the book's title, the first chapter deals with the period 1770-1820. Other chapters deal successively with the Jacksonian era (1823-40), the Pre-Civil War decades (1840-60), the War and Reconstruction era (1861-72), the Long Depression (1873-79), and the labor turmoils of the last decades of the century. Interspersed with them are thematic chapters dealing with foreign born and black workers; with the Knights of Labor, with the early years of the American Federation of Labor; with miners; with the Eight-Hour Day and Haymarket Affair; and with Socialism. Historical background is generally kept to a minimum, as Foner has dealt with those aspects in his previous publications. The final thirty pages of the book are taken up with bibliography, index of song titles and first lines, composers' index, and general index.

Readers who have not preceded Foner with their own search of nineteenth century printed sources will find little if anything in the three chapters (through 1860) that is familiar; none of these songs has survived down into the twentieth century, and I very much doubt if many survived more than a decade after their appearance. In this connection, it is interesting to speculate whether the broadside depicted on p. 15, a De Marsan sheet titled "A Loaf of Bread," actually referred to conditions of 1819-1822, in which context Foner discusses it. I would expect that the broadside itself was printed later than 1850.

Several of the spirituals and other songs dealing with slavery in the chapters dealing with the decades surrounding the Civil War will be familiar to students of traditional folksong, as will some of the pieces in the chapter on The Miners. In the latter, Foner draws on the collectanea of George Korson and others for several pieces, and even transcribes one hillbilly recording--Uncle Dave Macon's "Buddy Won't You Roll Down the Line"--in his discussion of the Coal Creek Rebellion of 1891-92.

This naturally raises the question whether hillbilly recordings could not have provided other examples for Foner to work into his text. "Peg and Awl," recorded by Kelly Harrell and by the Carolina Tar Heels, could surely have been included, though whether it dates from unemployment difficulties of the last decades of the 19th century or from the earliest, as the opening line, "In the days of eighteen and one," suggests, I do not know. Also appropriate to the unemployment tribulations of the 1880s would be the several versions of "The Poor Tramp Has to Live," probably originating in that period. And of the same cloth as "Don't Tax the Millionaire" (p. 280) would be Fiddlin' John Carson's "Taxes on the Farmer Feeds Them All."

The chapter dealing with foreign-born and black laborers has some still-popular pieces, though in some cases they are not taken from contemporary periodicals (e. g., "The Tarriers Song" and "Pat Works on the Railway" are taken from Greenway's American Folksongs of Protest).

Foner should not be taken to task for not being an expert in the area of hillbilly music as well as in the area of labor songs; rather we should take these omissions as evidence that those who are engaged in the scholarly exposition of hillbilly recordings have not yet completed their task.

-- Norm Cohen

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES

Ethnomusicology, XIX:3 (September 1975) is devoted to black music in the United States. Articles include: "The Folk Banjo: A Documentary History," by Dena J. Epstein (pp 347-371), a detailed survey of references to the banjo in both Africa and the New World, from the seventeenth century up to the Civil War, with five photographic reproductions. This article is being reissued as Reprint No. 33 in the JEMF's Reprint Series. Other articles in the issue are: "Afro-American Gospel Music: A Crystallization of the Black Aesthetic," by Pearl Williams-Jones (pp 373-385), a study of african influences on stylistic features of black gospel music of the last century; "Somethin' On My Mind: A Cultural and Historical Interpretation of Spiritual Texts," by John E. Taylor (387-399), an analysis of some textual aspects of black spirituals; "Music of Northern Independent Black Churches During the Ante-Bellum Period," by Portia K. Maultsby (pp 401-420), an historical review of the e-

vents surrounding the founding of the black churches in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and a discussion of the sources these churches drew upon for their religious music; and "Selective Bibliography: U. S. Black Music," by Portia K. Maultsby (pp 421-449), broken up into nine sections: general, origin and acculturation, religious and secular music (ante-bellum period), minstrels and musicals, blues, jazz, gospel, urban popular music (rhythm & blues, rock n' roll, soul), and "art" music of black composers.

Bluegrass Unlimited, 9:10 (April 1975) includes "Brother Oswald: That Good Old Mountain Music," by Bonnie Smith (pp 18-24). 9:11 (May 1975) features "Speedy Krise: The First Bluegrass Dobro Player?," by Ivan M. Tribe (pp 15-17) and "The R. F. D. Boys," by Don White (10-12). 9:12 (June 1975) has "Don't Let Your Deal Go Down: The Bluegrass Career of Ray Davis," by George B. McCeney (28-34). 10:1 (July 1975) includes "Mac Wiseman," by Don Rhodes (14-18), "Lawrence Lane & The Kentucky Grass," by James Wagoner (22-25), and "Clyde Moody: Old-Time, Bluegrass & Country Musician," by Ivan M. Tribe & John W. Morris (28-32). 10:2 (August 1975) features "100,000 Miles Away From Home--Jim & Jesse On The Road," by Bill and Bonnie Smith (8-18). 10:3 (Sept 1975) includes "Red Rector: Mandolin Virtuoso," by Ivan M. Tribe (12-17). 10:4 (Oct 1975) has "Charlie Monroe," by Ivan M. Tribe (12-19).

Pickin', 2:5 (June 1975) includes "Pioneers of The Grand Ole Opry: Uncle Jimmy Thompson," by Charles Wolfe (pp 36-37). 2:6 (July 1975) features "Buck White and the Down Home Folks," an interview by Doug Tuchman (4-12) and "The Caffrey Family," by Geoff Berne (14-18). 2:7 (August 1975) includes an interview of Mac Wiseman by Tom Henderson (4-14). 2:8 (Sept 1975) includes excerpts from a recently discovered (and soon to be published) autobiography of Alton Delmore (4-11).

Muleskinner News, 6:8 (August 1975) is devoted to women in bluegrass, with articles on The Lewis Family Women (pp 7-11), Betty Fisher (13), and The Happy Hollow String Band (14). 6:9 (Sept 1975) features "Ten Years Later, 1965-75," observations of many bluegrass musicians on the state of bluegrass, festivals, and the future of the two (7-13).

Memorial to Jimmie Rodgers, by Edward Allen Bishop (Marion, Miss.: House of Alohas, 1974), 40 pp., \$2.00. Biography of Jimmie Rodgers, with many photos, facsimiles.

M. F. F. A. Newsletter 2:3/4 includes a transcript of an interview with Tip McKinney, singer with Pope's Arkansas Mountaineers, by Julia Hager and Jim Olin (pp 3-10). (This publication is sent to members of the Missouri Friends of the Folk Arts; write to 101 Mary Hammack St., New Haven, Mo., 63068.)

New York Folklore Quarterly, 30:4 (Dec 1974) includes "The Image of New York City in American Popular Music: 1890-1970," by Floyd M. Henderson (pp 267-278), a survey based on songs listed in several song reference books that mentioned New York in the title. (Analysis seems to have been on titles only, not lyrics.)

ARSC (Association for Recorded Sound Collections) has undertaken an interesting and useful project: the compilation of a bibliography of discographies. The project is under the editorship of Michael Gray and Gerald Gibson, both with the Library of Congress. Compilers for individual subject areas are: Country/Hillbilly--Norm Cohen; Folk-Ethnic--Joe Hickerson; Blues-Gospel--David Evans; Spoken Documentary--Gary Shivers; Jazz--Daniel Allen; Classical--Michael Gray and Gerald Gibson. The bibliographic citation for each entry includes, in addition to the subject matter, place and date of publication, and compiler, an indication of which of the following are included: matrix numbers, release dates, take numbers, place and date of recording, and noncommercial issues. The Annual Cumulation for 1973 appeared in the ARSC Journal 6:2 (1974); the 1972 Annual Cumulation in 6:3 (1975), and the 1974 Cumulation in 7:1/2 (1975).

The Record Collector's Journal is a new tabloid newspaper size periodical to be published monthly at \$1.00/issue. According to Publisher Mark Elliott's statement of policy, its "sole purpose is to propagate and perpetuate the fun/filled and profitable hobby of collecting and dealing in recorded memorabilia and to cover all aspects and categories of music and rare recordings." (Write to Box 1200, Covina, CA 91722.)

Record Research #133 (June 1975) includes a preliminary survey on Columbia acoustic matrix number series, by Tim Brooks (pp. 2-8). Much of this information is pertinent to the subject of foreign folk music recordings, discussed previously in JEMFQ by Pekka Gronow of Finland. Part two in #134 (Aug 1975) (pp 3-4) includes annotations to the listings.

At The Mill, compiled and edited by Patty Hall (Los Angeles: Skimpy Publications, 1975), 68 pp., paper covers; photos; \$2.50. The story of the origins and development of the Sweet's Mill (California) summer camps for folk music and crafts, with many songs written about Sweet's Mill, articles, poems, drawings. (Copies available from the editor, 2590 Lancaster Road, Hayward, CA. 94542.)

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30. "Robert W. Gordon and the Second Wreck of 'Old 97'," by Norm Cohen. From *Journal of American Folklore*, 87 (1974).
31. "'Keep on the Sunny Side of Life:' Pattern and Religious Expression in Bluegrass Gospel Music," by Howard Wight Marshall. From *New York Folklore Quarterly*, 30 (1974).

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JEMF QUARTERLY

JOHN EDWARDS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



VOL. XI, PART 4

WINTER 1975

No. 40

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compiling, publishing, and distributing bibliographical, biographical, discographical, and historical data;

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Guthrie T. Meade, Jr.
Thurston Moore
Bob Pinson
Ralph C. Rinzler
Wesley Rose
Tony Russell
Charles Seeger
Michael Seeger
Chris Strachwitz
Bill Ward
Joseph T. Wilson

LETTERS

Sir:

I read with interest "The Death of J. B. Marcum" by Donald Lee Nelson (JEMFO 37) and would like to supplement his account with a few scraps of information I have unearthed about the song. As Nelson notes, the first commercial recording of the tune was the Chesnut-Martin-Roberts version for Gennett in August 1928, quickly followed by the more popular version of Mac and Bob on Brunswick. Yet over a year before that, on 2 April 1927, the tune was recorded for Columbia by Kentucky musicians Dick Burnett and Leonard Rutherford. This version, however, was unissued.

Recently during a series of interviews with Burnett, I asked him about this song, he replied: "Listen, I didn't make that...but I'll tell you who I believe did make it. That was about a man up here in Jackson, Breathitt County, I think, and I believe old man Charlie Oaks made that song... And then after he made the song, he went back up there one time and was singing that song and they stopped him. They wouldn't let him play it. Afraid it would cause up some more fighting or something."

Dick Burnett's track record in remembering details about his song sources I have generally found to be quite good. Oaks was a blind minstrel who, often with his wife, travelled around eastern Tennessee and Kentucky, singing in a high stylized voice and often printing up ballot cards to sell. Throughout much of the 1920s he operated from Knoxville, usually going to the train station every day to sing and ask contributions. It would be very likely that Mac and Bob, who were both in Knoxville at that time, picked up their version of the song from Oaks.

I am aware that the authorship of the ballad is generally attributed to Blind Bill Day, but the only evidence for this I have seen is a statement by Asa Martin that he learned his 1928 version from Day. If there is further evidence on the Day connection, I would be most interested in seeing it.

The article also neglects to mention that some versions of the song were recorded by the Library of Congress, including one by Maynard Britton, from Big Creek (Clay County) Kentucky in 1937.

Charles Wolfe
Middle Tennessee State
University

Sir:

I've been working with the Robert W. Gordon

collection at the Archive of Folk Song and among the interesting things that I've been finding are some items that Joe Hickerson suggested I bring to your attention.

It might be of interest to *JEMFO* readers to know that as early as 1924 Robert W. Gordon had an interest, unlike most folklorists of his day, in commercial discs and 'hillbilly' recording artists. When Gordon started the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress he arranged for the acquisition of some five hundred Victor discs, as you may know. (Lists of course can be found at the Archive). But way back in December of 1924, when Gordon was running the "Old Songs That Men Have Sung" department of *Adventure* magazine he was interested in the stuff. One of Gordon's *Adventure* correspondents sent him a clipping from the 16 November 1924 edition of the *Atlanta Journal* concerning Fiddlin' John Carson and Tom Ellington. I've included the item, number 825 in the Gordon *Adventure* MSS, in which Gordon responds enthusiastically to the mention of Fiddlin' John whose records Gordon by 21 December 1924 was already trying to locate, and 14 February 1925 was recommending highly to other correspondents. (number 876).

In your perusal of the Gordon MSS for "Wreck of the Old Ninety-Seven" material you may have seen the following letter (number 1080). In case you only worked with the typescripts I thought I would also send you the following Vernon Dalhart reference. Old Robert W. Gordon's still listening in on the hillbilly stations: here he's recording Dalhart over the air.

Debra Kodish
Mayfield Heights, Ohio

(The following excerpts are from the Robert W. Gordon letters to which Ms. Kodish refers)

[R. W. Gordon ms. 825]

Dec. 21, 1924.

Dear Mr. Rowland:

I am greatly obliged to you for sending the clipping about Tom Ellington and Fiddling John Carson. Many of the texts that accompanied the account of these two men were of real interest and value to the department. If it's not asking too much, may I count on you to send from time to time any other such accounts as you may run across?

Curiously enough, only a few nights ago

I had the pleasure of hearing Carson play, I sitting here in my room at Cambridge, and he playing at the office of the Atlanta Journal. Truly radio has brought us all a bit nearer. And by the way mention was made the other evening of certain phonograph records by Carson, one, if I got it right called "When Abraham and Isaac Rushed the Can." Wonder if you know with what company these were made. I've already tried Victor, Columbia, and Brunswick without success.

With all good wishes, and in the hope that I may hear from you again, I am,

Sincerely,
R. W. Gordon

[R. W. Gordon ms. 876]

Feb. 14, 1925.

My dear Mr. Steele:

...And in case you should, by any chance, remember any other bits that you heard in the mountains, I'd be very glad to have them fragmentary or not. They would serve at least as reminders, and might in this way make it easier to get the complete versions.

By the way, in case you ever buy phonograph records, look up the list issued by the O. K. Phonograph Co. for those made by "Fiddlin' John Carson" a genuine old mountain fiddler from Georgia. He has made some twenty records, the best I've yet seen of the type...

Sincerely,
R. W. Gordon

[R. W. Gordon ms. 1080]

April 30, 1935.

My dear Mr. Lipscomb:

Thank you very much for your welcome letter with the information concerning "The Wreck of Old 97." It was an old issue that you ran across, and since writing my request as printed there I ran across the record of which you speak - made by one, Vernon Dalhart, an old Texan, and later still met him personally and had a good talk on old songs. Curiously enough night before last I sat here in Cambridge (please note my changed address above) and not only listened to Dalhart who was singing, in New York, but actually made three records myself on my recording apparatus, he being over two hundred miles away and quite unconscious that he was caught here...

Sincerely,
R. W. Gordon

Sir:

For five years I have been carrying on a campaign to get a commemorative postage stamp

issued in Jimmie Rodgers' honor. As your readers doubtless know, Rodgers, "The Singing Brakeman," rose to become the nation's number one recording star within a few months of his first test recordings in August 1927, and his records sold throughout most of the world. On 3 November 1961, his name was placed at the Country Music Foundation in Nashville as the first entrant into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

On 14 April 1970, a request was formally made for a postage stamp to commemorate his works. This request was placed on the active agenda at the Post Office Department in Washington, D. C., where it is still being considered. Originally 1972 was proposed as the date of issue, as that year marked the 75th anniversary of his birth and the 45th anniversary of his first recorded song. 1977 will mark the 50th anniversary of his first recordings. A proposed design for the stamp (when it was designed the first class rate was still 8¢/ounce) is enclosed [see below].

Letters, petitions or resolutions addressed to the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, Washington, D. C., 20260, requesting a postage stamp to commemorate "The Singing Brakeman," Jimmie Rodgers, would be most beneficial and appreciated.

Henry Young
Bakersfield, California



Sir:

Re the Fiddlin' John Carson Discography in JEMFO #36 (pp 144-156): My copy of Carson's "Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane"/"Old Hen Cackled..." on OK 4890 has takes c/b, respectively. It does not state "Recorded in Atlanta;" however, the label design is of the type used for electrical recordings issued some time after the acoustics. On master 8615 on OKeh 7003, the second fiddle (just off the top of my head) sounds like (?) Gid Tanner!

Re the Earl Johnson discography in the same issue (pp 172-175): Paramount 33161 had fiddle and guitar only, and label stated "Earl Johnson and Lee ('Red') Henderson," so definitely Henderson on guitar. "Earl Johnson's Arkansas Traveler" (OKeh master 81-747) definitely had Henderson on guitar; 81-748 definitely has Rosa Lee Carson, as she says, twice, "Step on it, Earl."

Bob Healy
Pueblo, Colorado

DAVE McCARN

By William Henry Koon

The Great Depression was ready to hit the South in 1929, but in a sense it was already fact. In the Carolinas of Dave McCarn, the only industry was the cotton mill, and between the owners, who were using a variety of techniques such as the "stretch out," "piece work," and lowered wages, and the labor organizers, who wanted to unionize, the workers, for various reasons, were the pawns of the game. Neither the owners of the mills nor the union organizers were home grown: the mills were owned by northern industrialists who had come to the south for cheap labor; the unions were also from the north and were about the business of bettering America's working class, often with some political bias.

The role of the cotton mill organization cannot be overemphasized. Stanley, North Carolina's Presbyterian Church was organized in 1890 by the local mill bosses because the workers needed "moral guidance." And except for an occasional "jake-leg" preacher, all of the ministers in the Gaston County communities stood solidly for God and Cotton Mills. During the disastrous Loray Mill Strike of 1929, numerous articles and newspaper advertisements as well as handouts referred to the "rowdiness" of the new workers in the mills, most of whom had been imported from the North Carolina Appalachians or the South Carolina Piedmont. It was this rowdiness that Dave McCarn would so often sing about.

Dave McCarn was born in McAdenville, North Carolina, Gaston County, March 23, 1905. Although his father had been a farmer when McCarn was a small child, the elder McCarn started working in the Chronical Mill in Belmont about 1908 as a carder. At the age of twelve, Dave McCarn followed in his father's footsteps by beginning work in the same Chronical Mill. Sometime during his teen years, McCarn started playing the guitar and harmonica. He taught himself how to play and listened to everyone he could to learn a better style. During this time he began playing in a country dance band called the Yellow Jacket Band, which also broadcast over WBRW in Gastonia. Unlike many other Southerners, Dave did not have a musical family and seemed to have been the only one to have played music in the McCarn clan.

McCarn worked in the various cotton mills in Gastonia during the 1920's and evidently hit

the road, even hitchhiking at one point to Los Angeles. He had led a nomadic life, living for awhile with Howard Long and Long's wife, "rooming and boarding." In 1930 he was on the road, a fairly good place to be in 1930, for the big mill strikes that had hit the Carolina mills were over, with their bloodshed and loss of jobs. All over the South, the names of Marion, Gastonia, and other strike locations were ringing out. McCarn himself joined the union, although he was not much impressed with its activities. In the year immediately preceding his recording debut, Gaston County had become a national focus of labor unionizing with the strike at Loray, the death of Police Chief Aderholt, and the death of unionist Ella May Wiggins as a repercussion. Gastonia, like Harlan County, Kentucky, became synonymous with violence and company rule. Moreover, since the Communist Party, U.S.A. was actively involved in the Gastonia strike, it took on a vast importance that otherwise would not have been granted to it. About the situation in Gastonia's cotton mills, McCarn said:

Well if you were lucky enough to have a job, you didn't make too much, very much, and well in other words, the wages didn't compare with the prices of food. Food was always higher than the, you know, the wages. In other words, if Cotton Mill announced or that they meant to raise a few cents, groceries would automatically go up way before the raise come. So if they was no point in a raising. It didn't help any. The wages probably made it a little worse. But the times, some people had good jobs, but uh the jobs they had wasn't too bad, I mean they didn't work too bad, too hard. But you didn't make, too much, and then things got worse after that. Especially after twenty-nine. And it was bad enough before. But I don't know, just the way times was and the way things were going and the way the mills was running. Imagine that was where I got the idea for "Cotton Mill Colic," I don't know.

While he was on the road with his twelve-year-old brother, probably looking for work, McCarn happened to be in Memphis which unwittingly started him on his brief career in recording, on

May 19, 1930.

. . . we happen to wind up in Memphis, Tennessee, one time, and we got down a little bit, you might say, broke. And I had a little old guitar, a little old Stuart. It had a nice soft tone to it and we was a making the hock shops, try to hock it you know for a few bucks. But three bucks was the only thing we got offered and I wouldn't take that so the last hock shop we stopped in, there was a couple of boys in wanting to get strings for the instruments there. And, the proprietor, the, the proprietor or the manager says, asked the boys if they was going to make a record. Yes, if they could get some strings to stay on these instruments. I believe one had a tenor banjo or anyway he had it high strung. Well I perked my ears up then. Where? They told me right across the street in the auditorium. Went up to the auditorium and uh, and the room was full of people, Arkansas, Mississippian, Virginian and all of them there all around. And Mr. Peer, Mr. Ralph Peer, was talking to Jimmie Davis, uh they called him the hillbilly governor, you know now. And a when they got through Mr. Peer, he said all you boys or all you people have to go home; we don't record any more today see. You can come back Monday. Everybody left. Me and my brother sat around while; then everyone got gone while then Mr. Peers got done talking to Jimmie Davis. Well I told him, I said, "We can't be here Monday. We are just passing through." And we didn't say anything, he just stood there, he hadn't quite got through. He finally got through and he said, "Well come on in here in this room, I will be with you in a minute." I went in there and he sat down on his, sat down and put his hands in, put his face down in his hands so he wouldn't embarrass me. He knew I was already nervous, so I played the two tunes and we got through. "Well," he said "we will give twenty-five dollars a piece for these." "You mean you gonna buy 'em?" "Yeah, well how much money do you need to be here Monday?" "I don't know, will you advance me ten bucks."

So we stayed till Monday, and the recorder, and the machine was broke down so we stay over till Tuesday. So we made our two, two records and come back to Forest City, had a sister who lives in Forest City.

This account stands in strong juxtaposition with an account in the Charlotte Observer, August 10, 1969, which was about both the young singer Anne Cook Romaine and her mentor, McCarn. Mrs. Nellie Sansing, McCarn's sister, relates the following of McCarn's trip into commercial music.

Then McCarn began dreaming of Nashville,

Tenn., and the country music home.

"He kept wanting to go but he just didn't have no suit to wear up there. Then one day he managed to borrow \$50.

"He dressed up. Bought a suit, shoes, tie and a ticket to Tennessee.

"He made a record. After that he wrote several more songs and made a few more records. But he never did get much money. Just a little in royalties," she said.

As we can see, Mrs. Sansing has evidently elaborated on the story, mixing up modern Nashville and the historic techniques of Ralph Peer on recording country artists.

Some eight months later, in November of 1930, McCarn was to get word that Victor records wanted him again to record. His off-handed comments about not having any songs to sing seems plausible, although two of the songs possibly stem from an older tradition. Certainly, "Poor Man, Rich Man" and "Take Them for a Ride" are McCarn's own compositions, the former following "Cotton Mill Colic" and the latter somewhat in the vein of "Everyday Dirt."

But I didn't even have anything to put on. I didn't even have a song or nothin', but only [the] way to Memphis. And over-night, well I went, the next day, I had two or three songs I went and recorded. Recorded them and I told him I would have some more the next day. Well I went back and that night, I knew I kept the roomers up all night. Well I had enough to make, uh well I had three or four more by the next morning. And I went back the next morning they, and uh I think "Doc" Walsh was in there and he was getting ready to record. And that's all till the last time I recorded in Charlotte. The last two records and I never, I don't think they called me anymore because the records, what I made didn't go like the first ones. They expected them to go, all of them to go like the first one; of course if I had had one to go like the first one it would have been all right.

. . . it was up to the people in Camden, New Jersey, you know, to take the one they wanted. We made two copies of each song, and then, when got it to Camden, Mr. Peers told me that they decided which one to publish or put out. And the one I made got a little nervous. I was a little nervous all the time; of course, it was the first time naturally in front of a microphone. I sang one pretty good I thought. The next one I sang--that's the last of it, I got a little nervous, but instead of following with, I am a good as gonna start if everybody will. I said as was right on the label. First,

I said, "I am a gonna start if nobody will laugh," but they didn't seem to notice it so they printed that part of it, that copy of it or whatever of it.

In the height of the great depression, records were expensive, particularly Victor ones. McCarn saw this as a problem to his sales:

Yeah, and you know RCA Victor, that Mr. Peer told me that before they would sell one for less than 75¢ they'd quit, and you could buy them for 2 bits, good records you know, Perfect. You could buy that Perfect and another one I believe that sold pretty good around Gastonia, I think it was 25¢ or 35¢, where RCA Victor, they was getting 75¢ and wouldn't get under, never did get under 75¢ as far as I know.

About McCarn's later life, little is known. He worked at various mills in Gaston County until he finally swore off and opened up a radio and television repair shop in the Belmont-Stanley area in 1950. After his initial recording experience, he did not record again, and he did not play very often after 1931. When Archie Green and Ed Kahn interviewed him in 1963, he professed to be unable to remember any guitar chords or the words to many of his songs. Furthermore, he claimed never to have bought any of his records, and indeed by the time he was interviewed, he had forgotten some of the titles. He did do some more composing, mostly in the "racy" category.

Well I worked in the cotton mill, worked there until I got disgusted; didn't want to work there anymore. Got monstrous. Then I'd get into the radio business and stay with it a year or so. When it got monstrous. Maybe go back to the cotton mill and vice versa. And when television came on, I just got off radio and went right on to television. Principally the

same thing. Of course, the video part that's much different than radio. The works it still works almost like radio. And uh the last time I quit the mill and I haven't been back.

He died at his home in Stanley, November, 1964.

Unlike Bob Wills, Jimmie Rodgers, or the Carter Family, the short recording career of Dave McCarn did not have lasting effects upon the mainstream of America's folk song. He reintroduced "Will the Weaver" and reworked several older songs, and both his "Rich Man, Poor Man" and "Everyday Dirt" were recorded by other artists with a wider following. But the songs of Dave McCarn stand out in bold relief when compared to the "serious" songs and fiction that came out of the labor turmoil in the cotton mill struggles toward early unionization. The Loray strike itself was the subject of over a dozen novels attracting such writers as Hiram Hayden, Grace Lumpkin, and Sherwood Anderson, but they were all outsiders writing in a very serious vein of the injustices of the situation as they saw them. The few labor songs that have survived are steeped in an earlier wobbly tradition of hastily composed diatribe, in all probability sponsored by the outside unionizers.

McCarn was about as representative as we might find of the rowdy young man who saw the injustice and the humor of the situation and sang his recomposed folksongs accordingly. That there was a market for the records shows that McCarn was not alone in his detestation of the mill system; his future would have been brighter had the costs of records been less than the approximately 10 per cent of the normal mill worker's salary weekly--those that were working, that is. He did not see himself with any high seriousness and had relegated the recordings to a very appropriate place in his youth, an indiscretion of sorts that one does when he is young.



THE SONGS OF DAVE McCARN

In the one year that Dave McCarn recorded, he laid down twelve tunes, eleven of which were released. Of prime interest because of the importance paid to them by historians and journalists are the three songs devoted to the cotton mill: "Cotton Mill Colic"; "Poor Man, Rich Man"; and "Serves Them Fine." The latter two tunes were also known as "Cotton Mill Colic No. 2" and "Cotton Mill Colic No. 3." Two instrumentals, one of which was released, shows McCarn's more than passing familiarity with the guitar and harmonica. Except for "Hobo Life," which is a sentimental song in the style of Jimmie Rodgers, the remainder of McCarn's songs are "novelty"

or "hot" songs dealing mainly with sexual matters in the same vein as the early recordings of Gene Autry and Jimmie Davis.

Although McCarn is remembered for his cotton mill material, these "hot" songs certainly are an equal index of the time of the flapper and "St. Bay Rum," neither of which were sole property of F. Scott Fitzgerald or John Held, Jr. He took one very old song, "Will the Weaver" and changed it to "Everyday Dirt," and then used the same tune for "Fancy Nancy." His diction is earthy many times, and the allusions only thinly veiled. Strangely, the most attention still is paid to the "Colic" songs and "Everyday Dirt."

McCarn professed never to have owned any of his recordings, although he did hear them at friends' houses and at Gardener's Music Store in Gastonia. The recordings he made were not played back because of the process, so the first time McCarn had ever heard himself was when the finished product came out:

"Yeah, and it had a little effect on you, you know, let it give you a little, oh I, oh I don't know, maybe a little chill or little something (laughs) . . . Well, it kinda gives you a little thrill like in a ways, some ways you know, just to hear yourself. . . ."

At the music store, McCarn and a few friends had some good fun for free:

. . . one of the boys said, "I heard your record today." I said where at? He told me at the music store. So we went to the music store, asked them if they had "Cotton Mill Colic." They did, and we take it then to a sound proof room and played it a few times (laugh). Then put it back, give it back to the man, then went home. . . . Never bought it, right, never have bought one of my records.

COTTON MILL COLIC, POOR MAN, RICH MAN,
and SERVES 'EM FINE

Dave McCarn explained why he named his tune "Cotton Mill Colic."

Well, oh around the town a lot of people say they have the colic when they are griping about something, and they will say let's attack about, let's colic about it and go do something else. Well I just uh, put it down "Cotton Mill Colic" because I was colicing about the times in cotton mills and things, I guess, it seemed to be the perfect word for the song . . . but a lot back then did use it but I don't hear it too well sometime you might hear it. Yes, but not as often as you used to, but another words it's just a word. Just some saying the heck with it or your not treating me right or something.

Certainly the millworkers had much to colic about, for all over the South, various mills were trying to reduce costs and increase production. Manville Jenckes Co. reduced their expenses by a half million dollars in 1927 while stabilizing their production: workers were reduced from 3,500 to 2,200; there were two wage reductions in 1929; and piece work wages were adopted in 1929. The song is a direct protest of the working conditions in the mills of the time, and it reeks of the folk, unlike some widely reprinted songs from the Gastonia strike. He mentions the diet of the mill worker: fatback, pinto beans, and turnip greens; the problems of lower class matrimony: a fat wife and fourteen kids. McCarn himself was not married at the time, incidentally.

An educated guess would be that "Colic" was the reason that McCarn was called back to record since the topicality of the song made it popular. McCarn estimated that one store in Gastonia sold a thousand copies of the record. "Cotton Mill Colic" has evidently entered tradition because the Blue Sky Boys recorded the song on their Capitol LP in the early sixties and claimed they had learned the song from oral sources in the mid-thirties. It is also in Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People, almost identical to McCarn's recorded version in a copyrighted version by Alan Lomax.

"Rich Man, Poor Man" or "Cotton Mill Colic, #2" was one of many songs during the period that was recorded in multiple offerings. If someone had a good idea the first time, why, it should be just as good the second time. (This practice has slipped from country recordings with the exception of humorous songs such as those done by Homer and Jethro and Simon Crum.) It was recorded again some six years later by Lester Bivens on Decca 5559-A. McCarn remembered hearing the reissue:

Well I don't know if whether I, I heard, heard "Cotton Mill Colic" or not, but I probably did but don't remember it, but I heard uh the one they call "Cotton Mill Colic #2" or "Poor Man, Rich Man." I, we heard it played over the radio and also the guy that made the record said he composed the song which he didn't. Of course I didn't care if he did or didn't I knew he didn't.

"Serves 'Em Fine," "Cotton Mill Colic #3" is the weakest of the three colic songs. McCarn here takes a more stoic approach to the plight of the cotton mill worker. (McCarn himself after he became a man was a doffer.) Also, his imagery surrounds the idea of the mountaineer and his vision rings false with 'coon hunts and 'possums in the night. He does take a totally different tack by blaming the cotton mill worker for his own stupidity in thinking that he might get ahead while working in a cotton mill.

Cotton Mill Colic

When you buy clothes on easy terms,
The collectors treat you like measly worms.
One dollar down and then Lord knows,
If you don't make a payment they'll take your
clothes.

When you go to bed, you can't sleep,
You owe so much at the end of the week.
No use to collect, they're all that way,
Picking at your door till they get your pay.
I'm gonna starve, everybody will,
For ya can't make a living at a cotton mill.

When you go to work, you work like the devil.
At the end of the week, you're not on the level.
Payday comes, you pay your rent.
When you get through, you've not got a cent.
To buy fatback meat, pinto beans,

Now and then you get turnip greens
 No use to collect we're all that way.
 Can't get the money to move away.
 I'm gonna starve, everybody will,
 Cause you can't make a living at a cotton mill.

Twelve dollars a week is all we get.
 How in the heck can we live on that?
 I got a wife and fourteen kids,
 We all have to sleep on two bed stids.
 Patches on my britches, holes in my hat,
 Ain't had a shave since my wife got fat.
 No use to collect everyday at noon.
 The kids get to crying in a different tune.
 I'm gonna starve, everybody will,
 Cause you can't make a living at a cotton mill.

They run a few days and then they stand,
 Just to keep down the working man.
 We can't make it, we never will,
 As long as we stay at a lousy mill.
 The poor gettin' poorer, the rich a gettin' rich.
 If I don't starve, I'm a son of a gun.
 No use to collect, no use to rave,
 We'll never rest till we're in our grave.
 I'm gonna starve, nobody will,
 Cause you can't make a living at a cotton mill.

Rich Man Poor Man

Let me tell you people something that's true.
 When you working in a mill,
 I'll tell you what you have to do.
 You get up every morning before daylight,
 You labor all day until it gets night.
 You work a few days get pale in the face
 From standing so long in the same darn place.
 Along comes the boss as hard as he can scare.
 He wants you to think he's a grizzly bear.
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
 Let the poor man live and the rich bust.

When you go to dinner you have to run
 Or they'll blow the whistle before you're done.
 When payday comes you won't have a penny
 When you pay your bills cause you got so many.
 Sometimes you hear a racket like a bear in the woods,
 But it's only peddlers trying to sell their goods.
 The merchants they're all just about gray
 From studying how to get the poor man's pay.
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
 Let the poor man live and the rich man bust.

When winter time comes there's hell to pay.
 When you see the boss you'll have to say,
 "I want a load of wood, a ton of coal.
 Take a dollar out a week or I'll go in the hole."
 You'll have to buy your groceries at some chain
 Cause you can't afford to pay any more. store,
 If you don't starve, I'm a son of a gun,
 Cause you can't buy beans without any mon'.
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
 Let the poor man live and the rich man bust.

Serves 'Em Fine

Now people in the year nineteen and twenty,
 The mills ran good, everybody had plenty.

Lots of people with a good free will
 Sold their homes and moved to a mill.
 We'll have lots of money they said,
 But everyone got hell instead.

It was funny in the mountains rolling logs.
 But now when the whistle blows, they run like
 It suits us people, serves us fine dogs.
 For thinkin' that a mill was a darn gold mine.

Now in the year nineteen and twenty-five,
 The mills all stood but we're still alive.
 People kept coming when the weather was fine,
 Just like they were going to a big gold mine.
 As time passed on the money did too.
 Everyone began to look kinda blue.

If we had any sense up in our dome,
 We still be living in our mountain home.
 It suits us people, serves us fine
 For thinkin' that a mill was a darn gold mine.

Now in the year nineteen and thirty.
 It don't pay nothing to do us dirty.
 When we do manage to get ahead,
 It seems like all of the mills go dead.
 We're always in the hole getting deeper everyday.
 If we ever get even, it'll be judgment day.

There's no use to colic, no use to shirk,
 For there's more people loafing than there are at
 It suits us people, serves us fine work.
 For thinkin' that a mill was a darn gold mine.

Now all you mountaineers that's listenin' to me,
 Take off your hats and hollar "Whoopee."
 For I'm going back home in the land of the sky
 Where they all drink moonshine, and never die.
 I'll take my dogs while the moon shines bright.
 Hunt 'coon and 'possums the whole darn night.

If you can't get the money to move away,
 It's too bad folks, you'll have to stay.
 It suits you people, serves ya fine
 For thinkin' that a mill was a darn gold mine.

EVERYDAY DIRT

Archie Green's sixteen-year-old article
 "Will the Weaver's Hillbilly Kinfolk" is still
 the best that has been written on that venerable
 old ballad of adultery, forbidden knowledge, and
 retribution--all done with a deep sense of humor-
 and appeared in *Caravan*, August-September 1959.
 Green pointed out the American versions of the
 song in print and studied three hillbilly texts:
 Charlie Parker and Mack Woolbright on Columbia
 78rpm recording 15694-D, called "Will the Weaver";
 "Everyday Dirt" by McCarn, and "Jumping and Jerk-
 in' Blues" by Bill Carlisle, which was recorded
 in 1935 and released on Vocalion 02984 as well as
 on Conqueror, Banner, Melotone, Oriole, Perfect,
 and Romeo. The Carlisle text is interesting
 enough to quote:

Jumping and Jerkin' Blues

(spoken) Say folks, how'd you like to be in
 this fellow's britches? Listen to this!

John came home all in a wonder,
Rattled at the door just like thunder.
"Who is there," Mr. Hensly cried.
"That's my husband, you must hide."

Well, she held the door while old man Hensly
Jumpin' and a-jerkin' went up the chimney.
John came in, looked all around,
But not a soul could there be found.

Well, he set down by the fireside weepin',
Up the chimney he get peepin'.
There he spied the poor old soul
Settin' a-straddle of the pot rack pole.

Well, he built on a rousing fire
Just to suit his own desire.
Wife cried out with a free good will,
"Don't do that for the man you'll kill."

Well, he reached up, down he fetched him,
Like a raccoon dog he caughted him.
He blacked his eyes a little bit better,
Kicked him out on his setter.

His wife crawled up under the bed,
He snatched her out by the hair of the head.
"Now when I'm gone remember this,"
He kicked her where the kickin' was best.

The law went down, John went up,
He didn't have the chance of a yella pup.
They took John down to the old chain gang
For whippin' his wife, for very little thing.

Well, John didn't worry, John didn't cry,
He got a little closer and hit her in the eye.
They took John down to the jail
His wife come down to go his bail.

They took John down to the court,
His wife sued him for non-support.
It won't be long but he'll be loose,
I could tell you more about it but it ain't no use.

Now ladies, let this be a lesson to you.
Don't let your husband catch you, for if you do,
It'll be pretty hard to make him understand
Just why he caught you with another man.

(spoken)

Folks, I woulda yodelled to ya a little bit,
but I just felt so dad blamed sorry for the
fellow, I just couldn't do it. That's all!

Earlier, Green had written to Eugene Earle about
the problem of who had gotten what from whom--
did Carlisle lift the text from McCarn specifi-
cally? The possibility seemed a distinct one
since both used the same melody. Earle replied:

. . . "I suspect Carlisle and McCarn
got their material from a common source,
oral or songster, and I know for a fact
that Bill Carlisle does not own even one
of his own recordings, much less records
by other artists. Seems like recording
artists are not much in the way of record
collectors."

In the Green-Kahn interviews with McCarn, he
stated about the background of the melody and

the song:

Well, I heard it from Howard Long, the
boy who helped me make my last few rec-
ords. His wife, I used to stay with
them, you know, room with them, board
with them. I heard it from her the first
time and only time I ever heard it. And
she learned it from her husband's father.
. . . He's about eighty now, and he used
to sing it when he was a kid in the moun-
tains of North Carolina.

Green: And how did she sing it? As a
humorous song?

McCarn: Well I think she sing it like
Parker and Wool, Woolbright. . . . I
believe she sang it the same tune as,
it is kind of a, kind of a funny moun-
tain tune. Like I always say, of course,
I don't know what a mountaineer tune is,
but but it's kinda silly-like tune to it.
You know how "Will the Weaver" is . . .
I changed the melody all together, and a,
I don't know, I heard the tune probably
somewhere before. I think I have but I
have forgotten what what they call it.
What it was, it was a real old, old mel-
ody and so I fitted the words to this
particular melody and that was a little
after twenty-six, I believe. Nineteen
twenty-six or maybe nineteen twenty-
seven along in there somewhere. I know
I carried it around with me, sang it
around different places for years before
I recorded it in nineteen thirty.

McCarn explained how he had heard Bill Carl-
isle sing a version of one of his songs:

. . . but I heard more of the songs that,
a like there is Bill now, who made Bill
Carlisle's. He made the "Jumpty Jerking
Blues" but it is the exact. He added a
verse, he talked a verse and start to
finish, but he had exactly my song. He
couldn't got it anywhere else, but from
our record because I was the first guy
who ever made it.

Everyday Dirt

John came home all in a wonder,
Rattled at the door just like thunder.
"Who is that," Mr. Henly cried!
"Tis my husband, you must hide."

She held the door till old man Henly,
Jumpin' and jerkin' went up the chimbley.
John came in looked all around
But not a soul could be found.

John sit down by the fireside a weepin',
Up the chimney he got to peepin'.
There he saw the poor old soul.
Sitting a straggle on the pot rack pole.

John build on a rousing fire,
Just to suit his own desire.

His wife cried out with her free goodwill,
 "Don't do that for the man you'll kill."

John reached up and down he fetched him,
 Like a raccoon dog, he caughted him.
 He blacked his eyes and then did better,
 He kicked him out upon his setter.

His wife she crawled up under the bed,
 He pulled her out by the hair of the head.
 When I'm gone remember this,
 And he kicked her where the kicking is best.

The law came down and John went up,
 Didn't have a chance like a yeller pup.
 Sent him down to the old chain gang,
 For beating his wife, the dear little thing.

When he got off, he went back to court,
 His wife, she got him for nonsupport.
 John didn't worry, John didn't cry,
 But when he got close he socked her in the eye.

They took John back to the old town jail.
 His wife she come and paid his bail.
 It won't be long till he'll be loose,
 I could tell you more about him but there ain't
 no use.

BAY RUM BLUES

The celebration of bay rum is unparalleled in country song; perhaps Bascom Lamar Lunsford's "Mountain Dew" might be a close second, but it was (and is) a cruel fact of life that many counties in North Carolina have never fully recovered from the Prohibition Act. For many counties still remain legally dry, or offer only beer, and it is still illegal to have an open bar in the Tar-heel State. Substitutes for liquor were used for two reasons; one, whiskey could not be had except by the rich because of the prohibition laws, and two, substitutes were cheap and easily obtainable. Some of the substitutes were canned heat (Sterno), which was strained through a sock to remove the gelatinous mass; Aqua-Velva, which was strained through bread to remove some of the oils and flavoring; Jamaica Ginger, which was extremely poisonous, but still consumed; vanilla extract with a very high percentage of alcohol; hair tonics, again strained to remove the worst of the pollutants; patent medicines which had a high percentage of alcohol; certain exempt narcotics such as Chera-col which was alcohol and morphine based, paregoric (tincture of opium camphorated with an alcohol content of about 70%), and bay rum. Bay rum was an after-shave lotion which was adulterated with certain distillants from various petroleum products to make it undrinkable, supposedly, for human consumption. The distillates varied (and still do, since a check of UCLA's Pharmacology Research Library and current pharmacopoeias failed to reveal exactly what it is in bay rum that is poisonous). But the people drank it, and in McCarn's celebration we might find some none too subtle reasoning. It gets one high and is readily available, and damn the consequences.

Bay Rum Blues

I've got the bay rum blues, I've had them times
 I've got the bay rum blues, before.
 I'm longing for the ten cent store.
 Any ol' time I can rake up a dime,
 I'm going back and get some more.

Got the bay rum blues.
 And when I get in jail, there's no one to come,
 And bring me a bottle of old bay rum.
 There's no use for trying for I can't lose,
 Tell them long tall bay rum blues.

Some call it bay rum and some call it bay hog,
 Some get a dozen bottles and some get it by the
 But when I drink a dime bottle, draugh.
 I foam at the mouth like a hog.

I got the bay rum blues.
 And when I get thirsty, there's no one to thank,
 For giving me a dime so I can drink.
 No use for trying cause I can't lose,
 Them long tall slim-legged bay rum blues.

When you can't get liquor and you can't get no
 gin,
 Don't get disgusted for you have a chance to win.
 Get a long goose neck bottle,
 And you'll never be sober again.

Got the bay rum blues.
 Now some use bay rum just for a tonic,
 But take it from me it's best for the stomach.
 It's no use trying for I can't lose,
 Them long tailed slim-necked bay rum blues.

Uncle Sam has taken our liquor away from us.
 When I make homebrew he raises an awful fuss.
 We're all afraid of ginger,
 But we'll drink bay rum or bust.
 Got the bay rum blues.

There's no way of stopping us anymore.
 So you better look out Mr. Ten Cent Store.
 There's no use trying for I can't lose,
 Them long tall good ole' goose neck bay rum blues.

GASTONIA GALLOP

"The Gastonia Gallop," named after the town, has many ragtime elements, particularly in the "B" section of the tune where the melody follows rather closely the "Dill Pickles Rag." The melody is carried entirely on the harmonica, which is played in a bluesy, twisting of the reeds, which is very similar to the playing of Gwen Foster of the Carolina Tarheels. The unissued "Mexican Rag" was evidently a fingerpicked guitar instrumental, because McCarn stated that he had just put strings on his guitar and they squeaked too much, so the record was unreleased. Like many country guitarists, McCarn favored the playing of Riley Puckett. McCarn in the interview stated that ". . . I used my fingers, you know. Well, you know old time playing is just stand behind the song [chord]. Making a covering up with the

bottles you make. I guess (laughs), and I like Riley Puckett's, uh Riley Puckett. He had a good style. I liked how he made one you call "Fuzzy Rag." Riley did. Oh I just, I copied a little bit of that one song . . . "Carolina Girls."

FANCY NANCY and TAKE THEM FOR A RIDE

Both of these songs are about the wildness of the young girls at the time, and border on the racy side of party records. They are interesting because of the alternate version they give of the Jazz Age, and any one of the females could have been Temple Drake, moved from the campus of Old Miss to the shores of the Catawba River. The sexual innuendo in the first verse of "Take Them for A Ride" is plain enough; it's a reworking of the old saying, "put out or get out" and the legion of risqué jokes about couples in parked cars. And like Uncle Dave who frequently noted the changing morality scene, McCarn notes the change between chewing gum and drinking bay rum. The quatrain to close the third verse seems right out of contemporary music with the run around mother--quite a change from the normal image of Mother in the country and bluegrass world of sentimentality. The final image of a girl becoming humpbacked from "shaking that doggone thing" is at once grotesque and perfect.

"Fancy Nancy" is parallel to the "My Gal" types of songs popular with black and jug band singers of the period. Her extreme sexuality--covered as it is throughout the song marks this effort as one of the better uses of extended imagery in earlier country music. Like the "Carolina Girls," Nancy is a hot one who has to wear asbestos underwear and can really shake her hips as well as melting down the North Pole. The last two verses about the peeping Tom take up a not-often-used theme in country music, and Nancy's solution to voyeurism is unique. For contrast we might remember Governor Jimmie Davis' "Keyhole in the Door."

"Hobo Life" is the one derivative song in the twelve that McCarn recorded. The late twenties and early thirties were replete with hobo songs (and real hobos); Gene Autry, Geobel Reeves, Jimmie Davis, and Jimmie Rodgers were among the many who sang of this romanticized life. Later hobo songs were replaced by cowboys from the movies, and still later by the truck driver.

Fancy Nancy

Spoken:

"All right folks,
You want to hear something real hot now.
Move up a little closer;
Here she goes."

I know a little girl her name is Nancy,
Everything she does, she does it kinda fancy.
She'll take you in her room and then call you honey,
And when you come out you won't have no money.

She don't wear hosiery to hide her knees,
She doesn't wear nothing like B.V.D.
She's so red hot with that red hair,
She wears asbestos underwear.

She saved her money till she got a roll,
And then made a trip to see the North Pole.
The ice all melted in a time that was short
And then she turned it into a summer resort.

Spoken:

"That wasn't nothin' though.
Wait till you hear the second verse.
Here she goes."

I'll say a little more about that girl,
She's the best built gal in all this world.
She's a fast stepping mama and when she gets high,
She's a tomcatting sister with a devil in her eye.

She sure can shake two wicked hips,
She knows how to kiss with them red lips.
She looks just like an angel on the level,
But at the showdown, she's a very old devil.

If you see a little girl that looks like a dear,
Just take a tip and don't go near.
She'll fix you up so you'll ride in a hearse,
But I'll tell you all of that in the next darn
verse.

Spoken:

"All right Howard,
Let's get this last verse.
Let's go boy."

All the boys that hang around her
Carry a fire extinguisher,
And when she gets mad you can take it from me,
She can whip any man I ever did see.

One day when she took her bath,
Her boyfriend peeped and she took her wrath.
Now he's dead and they buried him deep,
So the darn fool could never more peep.

When I'm around her I sure act wise,
When she starts to dress I shut both eyes.
If you knew her as well as I do,
You'd shut both of your darn eyes too.

Spoken:

"All right Howard,
Take this guitar,
Put it in the case,
Then go home."
"All right Dave."

Take Them for A Ride

I'm taking my girl for a ride one night,
Rode in a Cadillac.
But I don't think she liked to ride
Cause she wanted to walk back.
And then we went again one night,
Rode in a rattletrap.
Rode all night till the break of daylight,
And then I had to throw her out.
Now all these Carolina girls,
They're easy on the hook.

But when you take them out you got
To watch your pocket book.
They're used to stroll in daytime,
And chew their chewing gum.
But now they ride around at night
And drink St. Bay Rum.

Now some girls like to drive your car
And some they like to snooze.
But my girl likes to pet the best
When she's full of booze.
Her daddy loved her momma,
Her momma she loved men.
Now her momma's in the graveyard
And her daddy's in the pen.

Two girls and I went riding,
Their names were Jack and Jill.
I soon found out they'd love to pet
In a Newport automobile.
Now one of these were wonderful.
She danced and she could sing.
But the other one had a hump on her back
From shaking that doggone thing.

HOBO LIFE

The one derivative song of the twelve he recorded was "Hobo Life." Although the hobo was a very real fact of twenties and thirties life--and indeed McCarn may have been one himself--the songs about hobos from Goebel Reeves, Jimmie Davis, and Jimmie Rodgers among many more must have been about as numerous as the hobos. In the mid-thirties, the hobo as wanderer was replaced by the singing cowboy and the romantic ranges of Monogram and Republic; the hobo was to resurface during the folksong revival as a subject for song, correlative with the employed wandering figure of the truck driver. Certainly this is the least interesting number that Dave McCarn recorded, probably composed just before recording as he has told us he did on his second recording venture.

Hobo Life

Travel o'er the earth for ages,
I've crossed the waters deep and wide.
I never thought to save my wages
Till the sweetest part of life rolled by.
I never had a thought to marry,
I never even had a girl.
I only thought of roaming yonder
To the other side of the world.
I never had a happy moment,
I rolled around all my life.
The best time of days I wasted,
I'll never have a loving wife.
I'm standing on the long steel railroad
But I'm moving on today.

Chorus: I hear a freight train a comin'
I'll soon be on my way.
I never like to ask a favor,
But remember me when I die.
And bury me beside a railroad track,
So I can hear the train go by.

When you take to rambling fever,
Don't you ever start to roam.
But go to work and save your money,
And you'll always have a home.
Don't be a tired and hungry hobo,
Always on the long steel rail.
You'll have to sleep beneath a shade tree,
You'll have to sleep in dirty jails.
You'll never have a happy moment,
You'll always be on the path.
And when you get old and grizzled,
What you miss will make you sad.
Now take my advice young fellers,
And don't you take the road that's wrong.

Chorus: I hear a freight train a comin'
I'll soon be on my way.
I never like to ask a favor,
But remember me when I die.
And bury me beside a railroad track,
So I can hear the train go by.

BASHFUL BACHELOR and MY BONE'S GONNA RISE AGAIN

Unlike the related song "The Stern Old Bachelor," the McCarn version tells a story with a minimum of floating verses about courting. Like several of his other songs, "Bashful Bachelor" talks once more about the "hot, country, Carolina" girls.

"My Bone's Gonna Rise Again" takes the Negro spiritual form in a strong sexual parody. Somewhat like Jules Verne Allen's parody of the sermon "You Mean Somebody, But You Don't Mean Me," the spiritual aspect is just the beginning of the fun. Certainly this is the strongest of the double-entendre meanings within the sexually suggestive songs of McCarn. The images are worthy of Jimmie Davis.

My Bone's Gonna Rise Again

Chorus

I know'd it, know'd it.
Indeed I know'd it sister.
I know'd it, know'd it.
My bones are going to rise again.

I asked my girl to ride with me.
My bones are going to rise again.
She got right in up on my knee.
My bones are going to rise again.
We had a big time that night till three.
My bones are going to rise again.
But I never will be what I used to be.
My bones are going to rise again.

Chorus

Me and my wife went down to the lake.
My bones are going to rise again.
We eat hot dogs and chocolate cake.
My bones are going to rise again.
My wife sit down on a long black snake.
My bones are going to rise again.
When she got up it was too darn late.

My bones are going to rise again.

Chorus

A hen and a rooster on a day so hot
My bones are going to rise again.
A romping and a playing all in their lot.
My bones are going to rise again.
The rooster looked at the hen's top knot.
My bones are going to rise again.
Come here sister and let's see what you got.
My bones are going to rise again.

Chorus

One day I went out to get
My bones are going to rise again.
A billy goat whose name was Pet.
My bones are going to rise again.
And one day that goat I met
My bones are going to rise again.
Right on the place I used to set.
My bones are going to rise again.

Chorus

Bashful Bachelor

I'm just a bashful bachelor,
A wife I never had.
To think what I've missed by heck,
It kinda makes me sad.
One day I went a courtin'
For farmer William's girl.
But if the earth was full of them,
I'd jump clear off the world.
Now listen hear young fellers,
Take my advise and quit.
Don't fool around with them country girls,
Don't monkey with them a bit.
They'll get you in their parlor
Wherever it may be.
But listen boys I'll tell you
About that girl and me.
I went to see a country girl,
Her hair was in a bow.
She led me in her parlor,
She had it in the hole.
I reached and caught her freckled hand,
She began to wiggle,
And I put my arm around her waist,
And she began to giggle.
There wasn't nothing funny
But I began to laugh.
She put her hand up o'er her face,
And bawled just like a calf.
I whispered in her hidden ear,
She hollered for her ma,
Who came a bustin' through the door
Followed by her pa.
The old man grabbed my collar,
The woman grabbed my legs.
The girl she grabbed around my neck,
I could not move a peg.
What has he done my daughter,
What has he done to thee.

Oh nothing my dear mother,
He wants to marry me.

Imagine my predicament when
The old folks busted in.
The old man had a shotgun,
She had the rolling pin.
The girl she tried to catch me
As I busted through the door.
I've been a bachelor forty years,
And it'll be for forty more.

SOURCES

Although little is known about Dave McCarn and the forces that shaped his music, much writing has been done about the Piedmont and the textile labor struggles of the late twenties and the early thirties. John Greenway's *Folksongs of Protest* and Lomax, Guthrie, and Seeger's *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard Hit People* both contain texts about textile labor activity. There are sociological studies such as Tom Tippet's *When Southern Labor Stirs*; numerous pamphlets were also issued about Gastonia and in particular the Loray Strike. The main sources of biographical information on McCarn are two interviews made with him by Archie Green and Ed Kahn in August 1961 and August 1963. Folk Variety Records of West Germany has produced a complete LP re-issue of McCarn's recordings (FV 12505), with notes by Mike Paris. Chris Comber wrote an article on McCarn titled "Protestin' Ain't New!" in *Country Music People* (Vol. 1, #6, July 1970), Archie Green's *Caravan* article (#18, Aug.-Sept. 1959) was referred to in the text. Almost all of the above writers focused on the protest elements of McCarn's songs, but as an examination of the texts shows, many were more concerned with the broader issue of male-female relationships than with economic protest.

-- Cal State University
Fullerton, Calif.

Novelty Hosiery Mills MARION, N. C.		Novelty Hosiery Mills MARION, N. C.	
PAY ROLL ENVELOPE OF		PAY ROLL ENVELOPE OF	
Name.....	Name.....	Name.....	Name.....
60 Hrs. @ 11 2/3¢	45 Hrs. @ 10¢	60 Hrs. @ 11 2/3¢	45 Hrs. @ 10¢
.....@.....@.....@.....@.....
.....@..... \$ 7.00@..... \$ 4.50@..... \$ 7.00@..... \$ 4.50
Less Cash - - - -	Less Cash - - - -	Less Cash - - - -	Less Cash - - - -
Less Coal - - - -	Less Coal - - - -	Less Coal - - - -	Less Coal - - - -
Less Rent - - - -	Less Rent - - - -	Less Rent - - - -	Less Rent - - - -
Amount Enclosed - - \$ 7.00	Amount Enclosed - - \$ 4.50	Amount Enclosed - - \$ 7.00	Amount Enclosed - - \$ 4.50

CURRENT WAGES (1930-1931) IN A SOUTHERN HOSIERY MILL.

Reproduced from *When Southern Labor Stirs*,
by Tom Tippet (Appalachian Movement Press, 1972)

WNAX: COUNTRY MUSIC ON A RURAL RADIO STATION, 1927-1955

By Bernard G. Hagerty

(The author of the following article is a political organizer on the staff of U. S. Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota. He wrote and was responsible for persuading Senator Abourezk to introduce the American Folklife Preservation Act in the Senate. Much of the information was gathered in interviews he conducted, in person and by telephone, with former musicians and employees of radio station WNAX; this material is now in the Oral History archives of the University of South Dakota at Vermillion.)

Yankton, South Dakota is a small town of about 12,000 souls, nestled on the banks of the Missouri River, across from Nebraska. The economy of the area, as of most of the Upper Midwest, is based on farming and stock raising. Aside from some historical interest as a capitol of the Dakota Territories, and some damn fine catfish from the Missouri, there is little to distinguish Yankton from any of a hundred other similar towns in the region. Yet Yankton boasted, and still has, one of the most successful and influential radio stations in that part of the country. This article is about that station, and about the years, from 1927 to 1955, when radio station WNAX featured live country music.

It is, I am sure, known to the readers of *JEMFO* that many of the early radio stations were founded for reasons that had little to do with a pure and unsullied love for radio broadcasting as an art form. Usually, stations were started to boost the sale of a particular company's product. In this part of the United States, seed companies were particularly fond of starting radio stations to encourage their sales. At one time this led to the amusing situation of Shenandoah, Iowa supporting two stations, each with 20 or 30 performers, boosting rival seed companies, with KFNF owned by the Earl Mays Company, and KMA by the Henry Fields Seed Company. If one added up the total number of people who worked for these two stations at one time or another, it would probably exceed the population of the town.

It is easy to understand, in a general way, how it was useful to a firm to own a radio station, and how country music could have been a very helpful promotional tool. What is not so well understood, however, is the depth and breadth of such rural stations' integration into the social and economic fabric of the communities they served. Stations such as WNAX had quite an impressive economic base, founded

not only on their provision of services, such as market reports and weather, but also on their social function as a center of community activities and as provider of the specific, listener-oriented, participatory brand of entertainment exemplified by country and hillbilly music. Thus, in focusing on the mechanics of a single radio station in a part of the country which is still, so far as I know, rather under-explored by folklorists, I hope to give a few small insights into the history of country music, and at the same time, to give a little recognition to one of the more colorful and significant radio stations of the live broadcasting era.

Radio station WNAX was the brainchild of Chandler "Chan" Gurney, son of D. B. Gurney of Yankton, owner of the Gurney Seed and Feed Company. Chan is still one of Yankton's leading citizens, and served as a United States Senator. It seems that, sometime in 1921 or '22, Chan got the idea that the family seed business wasn't doing as well as it might. Being a progressive-minded young man, he therefore approached his father with the suggestion that it might be a good idea to found a radio station as a promotional gimmick, as some others had done. D. B. agreed that this might be a good thing, and sent his son down to Shenandoah, Iowa, with instructions to take his time, at least two weeks, in looking over KMA, also owned by a seed company, to learn what he could about radio.

Chan, though, after seeing an operating station, couldn't wait that long. In fact, he was back in Dakota the next day, fired with enthusiasm. He and E. C. "Al" Madsen immediately set about constructing a transmitter, reputedly working from plans in a Popular Mechanics magazine. (This story may be apocryphal, since I could find no plans for a transmitter in Popular Mechanics at the time this was all happening. It's the way Chan Gurney tells it, though.) The intrepid inventors pieced out their good old Yankee avarice with good old Yankee ingenuity. When a rather large vacuum tube ran too hot, they obtained a metal milk crock, filled it with a coolant oil, and immersed the tube. The

antenna was a wire strung between two windmills on neighboring farms. On 9 November 1922, the Department of Commerce granted a broadcasting license to Dakota Radio Apparatus Company, E. C. Madsen founder, and the station went on the air.

It proved to be an abortive beginning, however. The owners quickly discovered that there weren't enough radio receivers around to make the venture profitable. After a short period, they went off the air. While they were on the air, they did broadcast live music, by locals rather than professionals, but no record remains of this period.

Nevertheless, the license was retained, and in 1926 the Gurney Seed and Feed Company, judging that times were more propitious, took over direct control of the company. They began broadcasting again in 1927.

To celebrate their return to the airwaves, the Gurneys conceived a gala event: a live, on-the-air fiddle contest, to be judged by the listeners. A Western Union station was set up in the living room of the D. B. Gurney home, where the contest was to be held. The musicians played, and the announcer asked the people to vote. And vote they did. 8700 telegrams poured in from all 48 states. When the flurry of paper cleared, the winner was an amiable, big gutted Irishman named Happy Jack O'Malley. He was the first entertainer hired, and was soon joined by an entire orchestra. Lewis Johnson, a fine old time fiddler still residing near Winifred, South Dakota (and still placing high in the annual Yankton Old-Time Fiddlers Contest) recalls a contest about that time with Happy Jack: "When the contest was over, Happy Jack and me were even. So we played, and then played again to break the tie. Happy Jack won, and went on to be a star on WNAX. Me, hell, I went back to the farm."

At the same time, a number of other musicians, a complete studio orchestra, was hired (see photo). Within a very few years, the station was dominant in its own region and heard literally throughout the country. One small example may be adduced to demonstrate the coverage WNAX achieved. During World War II, sailors on a certain ship, stationed at San Diego when not at sea, made it a custom to call in every week, and request certain numbers to be played at a certain time. They would then hook the radio up to a microphone, invite the local ladies on board, and hold a dance on the fantail, or whatever the correct nautical term is.

WNAX's great range was due to a number of fortuitous coincidences. Although it was not a powerful station, its spot on the dial, 570kc clear channel, was quite good. In addition, the land contours were favorable, (don't ask me how, I'm not an engineer) and the ground conductivity was excellent. At the present time, the signal is "shaped" toward the north, carrying very well

to Minnesota and Canada, in order to protect a station in the South. Until after the Second World War, however, the coverage was well-nigh universal. Although by no means unique, this range was one of the factors which allowed WNAX to be a successful station.

The Yankton radio station also quickly developed a reputation, among musicians working the radio circuit, as a good berth. The competition for jobs was quite intense, and it is a great pity that the many hundreds of audition discs made are now lost.

There were, really, two categories of musicians appearing on the station. The first were the touring groups, from Chicago or St. Louis or even further. These were generally ambitious types, lured by WNAX's large audience, hoping to make a name for themselves, or to sell records. Such groups and singers would usually stay for short periods, two weeks at most, and then move on. The second category included the station's own live talent staff, on a regular salary and obliged to appear on the station's showcase programs, the Sunday Get-Together and the Missouri Valley Barn Dance. It should be noted that all of the station's talent staff were professional musicians. Although a number of them lived in Yankton, none could honestly be described as "local talent."

The salary of a country musician on WNAX, while never opulent, and probably not comparable with the salaries paid by some of the bigger stations to their stars, seems to have been adequate. Moreover, even during the Depression, it was steady. Rex Hays, one of my informants and formerly musical director at the station, describes a typical incident at another station which, he says, paid less well than WNAX. The musicians, he claims, had been making fourteen dollars a week, and were thus overjoyed when the station manager announced that they were all getting a raise, to \$17.50 per week. Two weeks later, the station went broke, and they were all fired. This sort of thing seems to have been rare at WNAX, though a number of musicians recall salary cuts during the Depression.

The station as a whole prospered during the thirties. In 1933 their broadcast power was increased to 2500 watts, and in 1935 to 5000. (I must digress for a moment to discuss the historic dates and figures in this article. They are often in conflict with other published dates for the events mentioned, and figures are also often changed. For example, even the FCC is unsure what the original wattage of the station was. Most of the figures I give are from an internal portfolio prepared in 1954 by the Katz Agency of Sioux City, the station's PR firm. Their information is often incorrect, however, and wherever possible I have checked it with government or other official records. This is probably the most accurate material published, but I am sure there are a number of factual errors. The station's own records are



Above: The Original WNAX orchestra, 1927, taken in living room of D. B. Gurney home. L to R: Joe Salvatori, Art Harring, Joe Feiffer, Zeke Stout, Frank Hobbs, Bob Blasure, Charles Steinbock, Jerry Jacobim, Corinne Horst, Harvey Nelson, Randy Christensen, John Matuska. (Photo and identifications courtesy of John Matuska.)

Below: The Bohemian Band, ca. 1949. (Courtesy of Joan Nelson.)

lost, thrown out by succeeding changes of ownership.)

In 1938 the Gurney Company sold out to Cowles Broadcasting, which also operated newspapers in Minneapolis and Des Moines. This sale was the result of an unfortunate case of tunnel vision on the part of Chan Gurney, who by then owned the station as a result of his father's death. Chan Gurney is a member of one of Yankton's leading families, popular enough to have been elected to the U. S. Senate, and smart enough to have, by most accounts, done a good job there. He is a forthright, proud, talented man, not given to making mistakes. Yet, in this case, he totally failed to see the potentialities of a radio station as an independent operation. He didn't think the seed business needed that kind of a boost any more, so he sold the station, for a rather small fraction of its present estimated \$3 million value. He later saw his error, and this sale is still a sore point with the former Senator.

The Cowles ownership continued former musical policies, and went one better by inaugurating the Missouri Valley Barn Dance, copied from WLS and other national trend-setters. While the Cowles ownership was eventful in music and personalities, there is little station history that need detain us in a discussion of country music. Around 1954, the station was sold again, and the new owners, faced with television and a whole new entertainment and music complex, ended live broadcasting.

In discussing country music on WNAX, it would be impossible to mention all the singers, musicians and groups who played on the station, or even any good fraction of them. Textual analysis of the music, of course, is beyond the scope of this article, which is too long anyway. I think, however, that, by drawing on the memories of some of the musicians who played on the station, such as cowboy singer Eddy Dean, who came on the station in 1929, and is still active around Hollywood, California; John Matuszka, a classically trained violinist; and others, we can show the routine of the station, and evoke a little bit of its atmosphere.

It must be emphasized, first, that while country music was king on WNAX, it was by no means sole monarch. In addition to those who could be put under the aegis of "country" which ranged from old-time fiddlers and traditional balladeers to cowboy singers, there were numerous others, popular musicians, ethnic musicians, and even big-band swing musicians. The only universally-known musician to come out of the station, in fact, is Lawrence Welk, whom nobody, ever, has accused of being country. The musicians, too had quite a free-and-easy attitude toward their own styles of music. On their own shows, of course, they played what they were best known

for. But a single musician might play as many as 17 programs in a single day, especially if he was a member of the orchestra. Rex Hays has drolly described for me the frantic routine of grabbing new sheet music, and even new instruments, a dozen times a day during thirty-second commercial breaks.

Thus, versatility and an easy unorthodoxy were the order of the day. A cowboy singer like Tex Randall would think nothing of asking a big-band clarinetist like Rex Hayes, or a classical musician like John Matuszka, to back him up on a lonesome ballad. Another cowboy singer, Billy Dean of Sulphur Springs, Texas, even filled in for a while in the Bohemian band, plunking away happily to Czech folk tunes on his 5-string banjo. Tex Randall (from Kokomo, Indiana) did the same on guitar. Bert Dunham and Zeke Martin, two of the more facile guitar players on the station, backed up everybody. Even Happy Jack, the undisputed dean of the staff, regularly backed up other musicians on his fiddle.

There was at least one exception to this live-and-let-live philosophy, and that was George B. German. His reluctance to back up others, or to have them back him up, had nothing to do with arrogance, for a more amiable, unassuming man could hardly be found. Rather, it is a tribute to the purity of his music, and the stark simplicity of the cowboy idiom. As a teenager, George B., as he is universally known, went to Arizona for his health and became a protege of the great Romaine Loudermilk. George consciously styles his singing after Loudermilk, and one of the prize exhibits in the Yankton Territorial Museum, of which he is curator, is a cowboy hat willed to him by Loudermilk. It is, appropriately, placed on a cowboy, sitting in front of a campfire braiding a rope. George B. knows only very basic chords, and uses a simple thumb strum - no fancy displays of virtuosity, thirty-seven bar runs, or the like. His singing style is similarly simple. Yet his version of *The Strawberry Roan* is as good as any I've ever heard. He used it to introduce his program each day.

There are two points to this. The first is that technical virtuosity is not the essence of musical performance. It is possible, or at least it used to be, to be a great performer without possessing flashy instrumental or vocal technique. The second is that, as my informants agree, the instrumental accompaniments were usually rather simple. Great virtuosity, while sometimes present, was usually subordinated to the demands of the music.

There were, of course, exceptions to this, as to every rule. The aforementioned Zeke Martin and Bert Dunham would still qualify as hot guitar pickers. Jessie Mae Norman, of the husband and wife team of Ben and Jessie Mae, apparently played excellent lead lines on her metal, resonator-equipped National mandolin. (Ben, by the way, while running a business

full time, is the only person I found who still plays regularly on the radio, on a small station in Winner, South Dakota.) And, of course, if you've got a good fiddler, you let him play.

Which brings us to the subject of Happy Jack O'Malley. He has been mentioned before, but he still deserves a few more words. Happy Jack was by far the best-known musician on the station to people in the Yankton area. He has, in fact, assumed the proportions of a legend. His own proportions weren't exactly small, either. He was, by common consensus, a very good fiddler, if probably not a great one. He had a wide repertoire of old-time, hillbilly, and Scotch-Irish fiddle tunes, and sang a little bit too. His greatest asset, and one of the station's biggest selling points, was his Uncle Dave Maconesque character. His family still runs Happy Jack's two restaurants in Yankton, and I would recommend them to anyone going through that part of the country.

The number of musicians who played on WNAX is quite staggering, and, as I have said, runs the gamut of country and hillbilly music. Let me just mention a few of the names: Eddy and Jimmy Dean, and later their nephew Billy Dean, all from around Sulphur Springs, Texas; Utah Slim and Sweetheart Mary; comedians Helen and Toby, and Quarantine Brown; Blind Pianist and singer Homer Arp; the Nelson Family; the Kactus Kids, from Blue Island, Illinois; the Novelty Boys and Cora Dean; (Willie Pierson, Cora Dean's brother, played guitar and helped in the vocals, being particularly well known for his version of Tex Owens' "Cattle Call". He tells me the group started singing in 1938 in Boston, Massachusetts. The story was too long to get over the phone, but someday I'd like to hear how three country musicians from Hiawatha, Kansas and Utica, South Dakota started to sing in Boston...); Marge and Betty, the Carson Sisters, who featured an Ozark hillbilly style, complete with yodeling; Al's Rhythm Rangers; and Delores Hill.

One of the more successful programs in the 1940-1955 period was the Missouri Valley Barn Dance. The format was simple: the largest hall or stage available in Hitchcock, South Dakota, or Sioux City, Iowa, or wherever, was rented, and on Saturday afternoon, everybody, and I do mean everybody, was piled into a bus and taken to the chosen spot, where they first broadcast live for an hour, then stayed to play for the dance afterward. In the recollections of the local people who grew up listening to WNAX, this program almost invariably is the one that stands out.

At the beginning of this article I promised to discuss the economic base which enabled rural radio stations such as WNAX to employ country

musicians. To appreciate this, one must realize how important a radio station was, and still is, in rural areas. In many ways, it affects the rural residents' very livelihood. In the Yankton area, farmers decide when to market their cattle, or corn, or hogs, on the basis of the daily market reports from Sioux City on WNAX. It is nice if they know how the markets are doing in Chicago, but they absolutely have to know how they're doing in Sioux City. Similarly, the weather is of great importance to them. In the city, the weather report isn't so crucial; the urban dweller likes to know whether he should take a raincoat, and if next week is going to be good for a picnic, but it doesn't really affect him deeply. But to a farmer, the forecast, long-range and short-range, is crucial. It rains too much, he can't plow. If it doesn't rain at all, the corn burns up. He needs to know if he can space his work in the fields out over several days, or whether he should work by moonlight, and plan on going to town tomorrow, when the weather will turn bad. And finally, the rural radio station is the only media outlet which spends any time on the problems and concerns of the farmer. George B. German, for example, made a transition from cowboy singer to farm reporter, running around the country getting interviews and opinions on his "RFD with George B." program.

In other words, the rural radio station has a ready-made audience. Rural people have to listen to a radio station, they have no choice. In such a situation, before the advent of television, it was logical for a radio station, which was an important facet of its listeners' economic life, to attempt to maximize profits by becoming also a part of its social life. The provision of entertainment was a logical means of both fighting off competing radio stations providing the same economic services, and of painlessly extracting the largest possible amount of loot from the farmer, through advertising.

But the entertainment function of a rural radio station in the days of live broadcasting cannot be exactly equated with that of the present-day television station. Television is a passive entertainment form; one sits in front of it and is entertained. Radio, on the other hand, at least until the early fifties, was a far more participatory medium. True, people sat around it, but that is not all they did. Let me give a few examples of the participatory vigor of WNAX's listeners: -In 1945, the station held a celebration in Yankton, complete with a Typical Mr. and Mrs. Midwest Farmer Contest. It drew 70,000 people. -In 1952, when the station was well past its prime, a single show, "Your Neighbor Lady", drew more than 102,000 pieces of mail. -A single daily advertising spot in 9 weeks brought 2521 orders for, of all things, bronzed baby shoes.

Of course, musicians were the biggest draw. The Bohemian Band, with John Matuszka leading and reading song requests in Czech, caused sales of

Grain Belt Beer to jump like the proverbial goosed bullfrog. A cracker company sponsored another show, the Stump-Us Gang, and their Tune Crackers. Readers would send in the name of a tune, and a boxtop from the sponsor's product, in an attempt to stump the musicians. Entries were drawn by lot each day. The musicians I was able to reach who played in this group are unanimous in claiming 500 or more boxtops per day. Even allowing for exaggeration, that's one hell of a lot of crackers.

And, of course, the biggest attractions of all were the individual stars. The Bohemian Band was nice, but it was much easier for a teenage girl to get a crush on Billy Dean than on a whole band full of people who talked funny. One of the more amusing sidelights I ran into in gathering material for this article was the conviction, held in all honesty and humility by each and every musician I interviewed, that the amount of mail they got was a phenomenon peculiar to themselves. They didn't realize that the other entertainers got that much, too! One former employe of the station recalls that favored entertainers were often presented with cakes, and similar signs of esteem, through the mail. The number of such culinary tidbits received every

week by the station was apparently in the hundreds. And as for letters, Billy Dean recalls receiving as many as 1600 per week. The average for Billy and other entertainers was undoubtedly much less, but it still adds up to an impressive volume of mail.

In summary, country and hillbilly music on rural radio stations during the era of live broadcasting should not be seen as a primitive phenomenon caused by a lack of technological capacity for recorded broadcasting; nor should it be considered, as it so often is, only in relation to the rest of the entertainment industry, although it is true that changes in that industry were chiefly responsible for the decline of live broadcasting. Rather, it should be viewed as an integral part of the economic, social, and sometimes political complex of services which radio stations profited by providing to rural populations. In the process, radio stations such as WNAX, along with the record companies, benefited folklorists, and all who are interested in America's musical history, by bringing to the surface a large part of our rich folk music tradition.

-- Washington, D.C.



Left: "Lonesome Lloyd" Prichard, ca. 1940. (Courtesy Kim Prichard.) Right: George German, ca. 1973. (Courtesy Smithsonian Institution and Archie Green.)

PRESIDENT FORD SIGNS AMERICAN FOLKLIFE PRESERVATION ACT INTO LAW

[We trust readers of JEMFQ will be pleased to learn that the several years of diligent lobbying by JEMF's Vice President Archie Green and his co-workers for the establishment of a Federally sponsored Center for the preservation of America's folklore has finally come to a successful conclusion. The final press release of the Citizens' Committee for an American Folklife Center, dated 3 January 1976, is given below.]

On 2 January 1976, the first working day of the Bicentennial year, President Ford signed the American Folklife Preservation Act into law (P.L. 94-201). Folklife legislation had been introduced initially into Congress seven years ago by Senator Ralph Yarborough of Texas. In the past decade many folklorists and their allies have worked diligently to bring folk culture to Congressional attention.

In the First Session of the Ninety-Fourth Congress (1975), our bill, H. R. 6673, was passed in the House on September 8 by an overwhelming vote. This same bill, in amended form, was taken up by the Senate on December 11 and passed without opposition by a voice vote. Subsequently, on December 19 the amended bill was returned to the House when it passed for a final time by unanimous consent.

The main charge in the new law is the creation of an American Folklife Center (in the Library of Congress) to preserve and present folklife. The Center is authorized to enter into contracts with individuals, institutions, and private or public agencies. Also, the Center will become the major folklore/folklife archive in the United States. Finally, it is the intent of Congress that the Center staff serve to coordinate the work of other federal units in the area of folk culture.

Towards this end the American Folklife Center is to be governed by a seventeen-person Board of Trustees composed as follows: A) four Presidential appointees from among staff officials in federal agencies, B) four members appointed from the private sector by the President pro tempore of the Senate, C) four similarly appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, D) four automatic appointees--the Librarian of Congress, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Also, the Director of the Center is to serve on this Board of Trustees.

Individual citizens, who are interested in the Folklife Center's future operations, or who have questions about its formal establishment, are urged to express their concern directly to their Congressional Representatives and Senators, as well as to the Librarian of Congress.

JEMF ADVISORS & DIRECTORS HOLD ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the JEMF Directors and Advisors was held on 21 December 1975 from 2:15 to 5:15 P. M. at the home of Norm and Anne Cohen in Pacific Palisades, Calif. The majority of the votes being cast in favor of the slate proposed by the nominating committee, it was declared that Wayland Hand, Thurston Moore, John Hammond, Michael Seeger, Joe Hickerson, and Bill Malone were re-elected for a six year term; newly elected advisors are Ry Cooder, David Evans, and William H. Koon.

The annual report of the Executive Secretary was read and discussed. The finances of the JEMF Quarterly were discussed at length, with such matters as increased subscription, additional increase for foreign subscriptions, more extensive advertising, and obtaining a business mailing permit to facilitate stamped return envelopes coming under consideration. The majority felt that a raise in subscription price was inevitable.

Ken Griffis presented a report on the benefit concert held at the Palomino Club on Sunday 14 December; approximately \$1350 was realized. The advisability of other kinds of benefits was discussed.

The question whether the JEMF should sell records produced by other organizations was discussed; the conclusion was negative. It was also decided that the JEMF mailing list should not be made available to other agencies.

Paul Wells discussed briefly pending record projects that are under consideration. Albums that are nearest completion are: a reissue of the Capitol Blue Sky Boys LP; an album of New England fiddling; a blues LP from unissued test pressings donated to the JEMF by Art Satherley; an album using the complete set of eight test pressings of Ken Maynard, donated by Maynard to the JEMF.

HENRY THOMAS' LP SET

Early in 1975, Herwin Records released a double-LP reissue set, *Henry Thomas "Ragtime Texas"* (Herwin H 209), holding the total recorded output from Vocalion 78-rpm discs (1927-1929) of a pioneer Texas bluesman. This album of 23 songs represents the collaborative efforts over a period of years of Bernard Klatzko, Mack McCormick, Nick Perls, Mike Joseph, Tom Lisk, Mary McCormick, and other individuals, variously drawn to Thomas' unusual repertoire and "pre-blues" performing style. I shall not offer a conventional review of Henry Thomas' LP here; rather, I shall assess the album's importance as an historical document as well as a marker in record reissue activity. Also, incorporated in this feature are several graphics supplementing those used in the LP.

The label name Herwin itself dates to the years 1926-1929 in St. Louis, where originally it was used to sell race and hillbilly records of the decade. Bernard Klatzko (Glen Cove, New York 11542) had no connection with the early Herwin enterprise other than a contemporary collector's nostalgic affection for this name's sense of past time and present rarity. In 1971 Klatzko brought Herwin out of limbo with an LP of Freddie Keppard. This established his own firm specializing in jazz and blues reissues. It can be assumed that all readers of the *JEMF Quarterly* know something of the variety in reissue LPs -- those produced by major companies from their own vaults, and those produced by private collectors from personal holdings.

When a collector establishes himself in business to reissue any early material, he assumes that a market exists made up of other enthusiasts, libraries, and archives large enough to justify his enterprise. He knows that the bottom line for even the most esoteric reissue LP is individual sales. Unlike major producers, specialty firms may sell only enough records to "break even," but they figuratively embroider their products with affection and devotion. Bernard Klatzko's superb treatment of the Henry Thomas album is not only a fine testimony to an itinerant black songster, but it is also a mark that a sizable audience exists for whom biography, discography, folkloric analysis, and graphic art are indispensable complements to music.

Physically, this Henry Thomas double-jacket set includes ten full pages of notes -- two liner pages and eight inserted pages of tightly-printed biography and transcribed song texts. Mack McCormick's article "Henry Thomas: Our Deepest Look at the Roots" runs 9000 words in length, far longer than most treatments in similar LP brochure or back liner notes. The album also holds five undated photos taken by Mack, a Texas &

Pacific Railway schedule from 1930, two railroad maps prepared jointly by Mack and Nova Graphics, and four Vocalion Records advertisements, 1927-1929, drawn from microfilm copies of the *Chicago Defender*.

The assumption built into all LP brochure or liner notes is that a listener is also a reader, and that the emotion locked into a record's grooves is enhanced or heightened by intelligent commentary. In these terms Mack McCormick's biographical study of Henry Thomas must be judged as one of the best accompanying any American LP reissue in the folk blues field. To begin: Mack is a Texan as much caught up by his region's vitality as was J. Frank Dobie, or is Larry McMurtry. In characterizing Henry Thomas' native Upshur County, Mack writes, "It's chigger and chinch country. The summers are heavy and muggy until thunderstorms crack open the sky.... It was a rural world where flat bed wagons and buggies crawled along dirt roads that wound through magnificent forests and passed fields where workers sweated with balky mules. Timber gangs and church congregations created soaring music."

Mack McCormick is also a serious folklorist who has specialized in collecting blues and in producing LPs of key performers such as Mance Lipscomb and Lightin' Hopkins. Mack's technique in his Henry Thomas notes stems from detective fiction -- how does one reconstruct a life story from but a few fragmentary clues? In 1949 Mack met briefly an old hobo guitarist near Houston's Union Station. This black street singer may have been, and very likely was, Henry Thomas, a Vocalion race record artist of the late 1920s. By 1958 Mack's curiosity about his Houston encounter became a "mild preoccupation." (Perhaps "obsession" would be a more precise word.) In 1968 Mack found G. R. Hardy, a retired conductor at Shreveport who remembered Thomas singing to children on the train. At an East Dallas housing project in 1973 Mack interviewed George Thomas, a relative of Henry, to obtain needed facts about the singer's life. I shall not go beyond these bare kernels; anyone who has looked for a "missing" artist or who has been curious about this search process will take deep pleasure in McCormick's achievement.

If there is anything lacking in the album's notes, it is a sequential account of Mack's personal role in the "discovery." Without telling his own age or revealing his interest, McCormick appears suddenly on a street corner in Houston, 1949, fascinated by a black hobo guitarist. This is a marvelous opening for a Dashiell Hammett novel, but it only whets my appetite for additional information. I want to know what longings and intuitions prepared Mack for his many interviews and recording adventures. I want, also, to see the convoluted path

through the maze from this early 1949 Houston encounter to the 1975 Herwin reissue of Thomas' discs.

McCormick himself must eventually select his time and place for an autobiographical statement. At this juncture, I can sketch only a few details: Mack McCormick was born in 1930, his father from Texas, his mother from Ohio. When they separated, their son was shunted from south to north and back again. Feeling that he was an "outsider" in both areas, he became sensitive to regional differences in radio music which he heard in his childhood homes. While still in high school he was already a serious jazz buff, ready to correspond with distant English collectors. In *Playback Magazine* (New Orleans 1949), he published his first musical article based on interviews with members of Houston's KXYZ Novelty Band.

From jazz writing Mack made an easy transition to blues and from blues he moved naturally to folkloric scholarship. Important to my response to Thomas' Herwin album is my knowledge of Mack's early awareness (in the late 1940s) that Texas black street singers were not as "established" as jazz musicians, and therefore demanded serious attention by white collector-scholars. Actually, Mack had prepared himself for his 1949 encounter with Henry Thomas (?) by drawing on the previous writings of folklorists (for examples, Dorothy Scarborough, Howard Odum) and jazz fans (for examples, Orin Blackstone, E. Simms Campbell). It is my contention that McCormick's study of Henry Thomas is intrinsically strong because Mack has listened carefully and closely to black music, unafraid of conceptual analysis. But Mack's strength flows also from his magnificent command of bibliography. I sense that he has read everything ever published on the blues from Walter Kingsley to Tony Russell.

I talked to Mack McCormick on 21 November 1975 about his collaborative effort with Bernard Klatzko in issuing Henry Thomas' LP, and was quite surprised to learn that these collector-producers had never met each other. Their work on Herwin H 209 covered some three years of correspondence. Apparently, Klatzko was inspired to begin the Thomas set by a similar double album, *Charley Patton* (Yazoo L 1020). Also, Klatzko had supplied some recordings to Pete Whelan and Bill Givens in 1962 when they produced a reissue, *Henry Thomas Sings the Texas Blues* (Origin Jazz Library OJL 3). This LP held 14 Thomas songs and was a needed step in calling attention to Thomas' importance. The only defect in the OJL reissue was the lack of any accompanying contextual data in brochure or jacket liner notes.

A decade later when Klatzko gathered tape dubs of all Thomas' 78-rpm discs for the Herwin set, he knew that McCormick previously had been piecing together bits of Thomas' life -- this information was part of the shared knowledge in the fraternity of underground blues buffs. Well before the album was ready for mastering, Klatzko

and McCormick agreed on the need for printed texts for the 23 songs. For this staggering task of transcribing all Thomas' recorded repertoire, Mike Joseph, living near Hartford, Connecticut, prepared the first draft (late in 1972) which was mailed to McCormick via Klatzko's home in Glen Cove. In Houston, Mack and his wife reconciled Joseph's work with their own sense of rural colloquial speech.

I shall not comment on any of Thomas' specific blues or ballads, monologues or gospel pieces, except to note that many listeners will be attracted to the artist's use of quills or pan pipes -- highly unusual in either commercial or archival field recordings. I shall commend McCormick for seeing his Thomas notes as part of a larger, yet unwritten, study of Afro-American folk music -- a desired and needed encyclopedic compilation to be produced by many hands. Mack does not subscribe to the notion that the blues were born in one place or created by a single artist. Specifically rejecting the "kinky obstetrical imagery" implied in the phrase "the birth of the blues," he concerns himself with the turn-of-the-century shift by rural blacks to urban and industrial life. Thomas "was part of that transition, a harsh revolutionary period that is evidenced in the remarkable burst of new music that came out of it."

Henry Thomas, born in 1874, brought to Vocalion's Chicago studios a songbag of narratives, reels, and minstrel bits which all together preceded blues. He also knew and sang blues in their formative decade. Accordingly, Thomas' LP set, and its closely transcribed texts, is a contribution of the highest rank to present-day Afro-American studies. Thomas today, as we listen to his Vocalion discs of 1927-1929, conveys many feelings: the hard texture of an itinerant life, the perceptions of early scholars upon hearing black folk poetry, the encounter and mutual borrowing within Anglo and Afro traditions in America.

I close with a skeletal chronology, which now covers a century:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1874: | Henry Thomas born in Upshur County, Texas. |
| July 1927: | First recording date in Vocalion's Chicago studio. |
| 10 Sept. 1927: | Ad for Thomas' first issued disc "John Henry" in <i>Chicago Defender</i> . |
| Oct. 1929: | On final session Thomas records "Railroadin' Some," subsequently used by McCormick to trace geography of artist's life. |
| 1948: | Inclusion of some of Thomas' records in Orin Blackstone's <i>Index to Jazz</i> , Volume Four. This publication date can be used to note initial attention by scholars to Thomas. |
| 1949: | McCormick encounters Henry Thomas (?) in Houston. |
| 1952: | Inclusion of "Old Country Stomp" and "Fishing Blues" in Harry Smith's reissue anthology, |

American Folk Music
(Folkways FP 251, 252, 253), brings Thomas to attention of folksong "revival" audience.

- 1958: McCormick undertakes serious Thomas research. (Specific trigger for this "preoccupation" unstated in Herwin album notes).
- 1962: *Henry Thomas Sings the Texas Blues* (Origin Jazz Library OJL 3) released.
- 1972: Bernard Klatzko undertakes a full Thomas reissue set.
- 6 Feb. 1975: Henry Thomas "Ragtime Texas" (Herwin H 209) released.

Whether my role in this JEMFO graphics series is perceived as that of fan or folklorist, collector or commentator, I am aware that I have always been "greedy." Now that we are all treated to Henry Thomas' full recorded repertoire, and magnificent inserted album notes, I want more. Here are a few sample questions stimulated by Thomas' Herwin LP set:

- A) Will a musicologist consider transcriptions of Thomas' songs and some comparative commentary?
- B) In the event that Klatzko reprints this LP jacket cover, can he expand the list of Thomas' 23 selections into a full discography? An album of this importance deserves recording dates and master numbers, as well as data on other reissued Thomas material in America and Europe.
- C) Was Thomas completely unknown to jazz-blues scholarship prior to Orin Blackstone's *Index to Jazz*, 1948?
- D) Can we ask Mack McCormick for an account of his own growth as a collector-scholar? Even though we observe his skills upon reading these Herwin notes on Thomas and his songs, we sense that Mack has book-length studies in reserve.
- E) Can we ask Bernard Klatzko for a factual account of the physical production of this particular-LP? Where did he locate all of Thomas' 78-rpm discs? How did he persuade Mike Joseph to undertake the onerous task of textual transcription? What magic did Klatzko employ to handle this complex production by correspondence?

I ask these current questions knowing that we shall forever lack vital data on Henry Thomas' Chicago recording sessions. In the prime of his life (1927) he could have talked to Carl Sandburg or Dorothy Scarborough, had a linking mechanism existed to join the realms of bluesman, poet, folksong collector, and sound recording executive. Can we not assume that a Vocalion A & R man asked Thomas in 1927 for some biographical facts? Did Thomas invite himself to Chicago or was his way cleared by others? Will the methods and motives of Mack McCormick, Bernard Klatzko, and their peers

also be shrouded in mystery a half-century from now?

Mack McCormick, in his Thomas notes, has created a striking metaphor to encompass race records: "A great diary in which hundreds of people had written their stories." Further, this Afro-American volume is full of torn and missing pages, not because the writers/musicians/diarists were inarticulate, but rather because individual biographies were largely overlooked by the music industry. In Mack's view, collectors who treasure old race records and reissue them publicly in LP form, serve to replace mutilated and missing pages in the vivid account of Afro-American people. To fill in the blanks in any diary is, of course, to demystify history, to grasp it in intelligible terms. And, this, ultimately, is the measure of Mack McCormick and Bernard Klatzko's beautiful tribute to Henry Thomas.

-- University of Texas at Austin

Picture Sources:

Chicago Defender -- Bernard Klatzko

Orin Blackstone -- Richard Allen, Archive of New Orleans Jazz: Tulane University Library

JAF & PTFLS -- UCLA Library



THE CHICAGO DEFENDER

Richard B. Blackstone

VOLUME FOUR

INDEX TO JAZZ

MITE MOLE: OK 41445, HRS 15.
CHARLES PIERCE: Para 12619, 12616.
ELMER SCHOBEL: Br 4652.

TESCHEMACHER'S CHICAGOANS. FRANK (Frank Teschemacher, clarinet and alto; Rod Cless, alto; Mezz Mezzrow, tenor; Joe Sullivan, piano; Eddie Condon, banjo; Gene Krupa, drums);
UHCA 61. Jazz Me Blues (C1906-A)
Unissued. Jazz Me Blues (C1906-B)/Singing the Blues (C1905-A,B)

FRANK TESCHEMACHER, with the Chicago Rhythm Kings (names changed from Louisiana Rhythm Kings): Mugsy Spanier, cornet; Frank Teschemacher, clarinet; Mezz Mezzrow, tenor; Joe Sullivan, piano; Eddie Condon, banjo; Jim Lannigan, bass; Gene Krupa, drums);
Br 80064. Baby Won't You Please Come Home (C 1907, E 7348W)
(see also: Chicago Rhythm Kings, Louisiana Rhythm Kings, McKenzie-Condon)

TEXAS BLUES DESTROYERS (Bubber Miley trumpet, with organ accompaniment):
Vo 14913. Lenox Ave. Shuffle/Down in the Mouth Blues -Pe 14341, Pat 036160

TEXAS TOMMY (Tom Dorsey, vocal and guitar, acc. by piano):

Br 7044. Jail Break Blues/Trinity River Bottom Blues
Vs 6035. Ridin' Papa (15306)/It's All Over (15307)
Vs 6039. New Using That Thing (15308)/Broke and Hungry (15309)

THARPE, SISTER ROSETTA (vocals with guitar):

De 2243. The Lonesome Road/Rock Me
De 2328. I Looked Down the Line/God Don't Like It
De 2503. My Man and I/What's All
De 2558. Bring Back Those Happy Days/This Train
De 3254. Beams of Heaven/Saviour Don't Pass Me By
De 3956. Rock Daniel! (acc. Lucky Millinder Orch.)/(MILLINDER)
De 4041. Trouble in Mind (acc. Lucky Millinder Orch.)/(MILLINDER)
De 8538. Sit Down/End of My Journey
De 8538. Stand By Me/There Is Something Within Me
De 8594. I'm in His Care/Just a Closer Walk With Thee
De 8610. Nobody's Fault But Mine/Precious Lord Hold My Hand
De 8634. I Want Jesus to Walk Around My Bedside/Pure Religion
De 8634. All Over This World/What He Done for Me
De 8637. Sleep on Darling Mother/I Want to Love to God Can Use Me
De 8697. Two Little Fishes/Strange Things Happening Every Day -De 48009
De 8672. Singing in My Soul/I Claim Jesus First
De 11002. When I Move to the Sky/Don't Take Everybody to Be Your Friend
(-De 48025)

THEARD, LOVIN' SAM (blues singing):

De 7025. Rubbin' on the Darned Old Thing/That Rhythm Gal
De 7146. Till I Die
(See also: Lovin' Sam from Alabam')

THOMAS' DEVILS:

Br 7064. Boot It Roy/Who Is Hot

THOMAS' MUSCLE SHOALS' DEVILS: See 15307
OK 8225. Morning Dove Blues/Wash Woman Blues

THOMAS, EARL (blues singing):

De 7195. Burying Ground/Sugar Girl Blues
De 7221. Bonus Men/Rent Day Blues

THOMAS, GEORGE (vocals, first coupling under name of Ramblin' Thomas, with guitar acc.):
Para 12616. Sawmill Moan (20337)/Ramblin' Mind Blues (20339)
(piano and guitar acc.):

Para 12826. Fast Stuff Blues (1426)/Don't Kill Him in Here (1427)

THOMAS, TRACTIME TEXAS' HENRY (vocals with guitar):

Vo 1064. John Henry/Cottonfield Blues
Vo 1137. The Fox and the Hounds/Red River Blues
Vo 1197. Don't Ease Me In/Texas Easy Street Blues
Vo 1230. Bull Doze Blues/Old Country Stomp
Vo 1249. Texas Worried Blues/Fishing Blues
Vo 1443. Railroadin' Some/Don't Leave Me Here

THOMAS, HERSAL (piano solos):

OK 8227. Suitcase Blues (8958-A)/Hersal Blues (9166-A)
(See also: Hociel Thomas) See 15307

THOMAS, HOCIEL (vocals, with piano, clarinet and violin):
ce 3004. I Can't Feel Frisky Without My Whiskey (WARIE GRINTER)
ce 3006. Worried Down With the Blues/I Must Have It

Chicago

Dr. BILLY JONES

times he had entered the profession with the Black Patti show in 1923.

Black and Susbie, round boys, were a big hit at the Palmer Keltia theater, a New York, and were held for another year, but it was the first time in history that a Negro act played two weeks straight.

There seems to be some misunderstanding as to who first wrote the song, "Talk That Talk." Well, Tom Deane, the song writer in Baltimore, wrote the original song. I wish that

by DAVE PEYTON

for a scholarship in the East

[illegible]

MAONE MARYD OWLIS

...gave a
and for the
in the show,
wed by
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have a
sing. A Ste
of fellow
re. Colom
ties, always
anner town,
up a bill
the show

.....

Perkins Hughes, the
celebrate this week for
only saying an offer
sawed her there.

Loretta Woodan says
will find her at Over-
week of Oct. 1. She is
Green show.

Earl Calmar wants
408 N. 14th st., May
Little Mae Singleton
on Elberton show.

and Hord Thomas
is at 875 E. Columbia
Tad will be
a time etc. or about

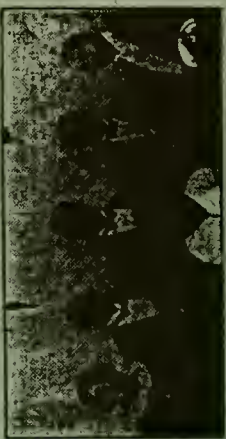
has the distinction
an artist in the world
without his pet without
the doing the fiction
an ordinary la-
been addressed by his

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er. They have been very proud
house and meat have made good
company will spend in Melle,
Pitts theater the week of Oct. 3
being a real producer and
superior and stranger of music, has
changed a new song and built
new around it called "Wild Birds
believe it will be a winner.

the golden-voiced

with **Hattie Parker**
on this **Victor** *new* **Record**



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LEAVE IT THERE
PAGE TWENTY SONGS
FROM THE NEW SONGS

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 21535 { It's Gonna Rain
 21536 { Don't Make It Too Late
 21539 { Police Done Tore My Playhouse Down
 I'm Going to See My Ma
 21525 { Sugar
 21524 { She Says Out All Night Long
 21534 { Blue Piano Stomp
 Blue Clarinet Stomp

REV. CAMPBELL
 NEED & DUNCAN
 ELIZABETH SMITH
 ALBERTA HUNTER
 THOMAS WALKER
 TINY PARRAN AND HIS MUSICIAN
 Switching Gambler Blues
 JOSEPH JUNG BAND
 JOSEPH DOODS' TRIO

JAZZ—SMOKING HOT
 Sugar
 Hog-Man Stomp
 The Head Hunter's Dream
 Cuckoo Blues
 Switching Gambler Blues
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 Blue Piano Stomp
 Blue Clarinet Stomp

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 Keep's a lot of fun
 Rat-tat-tat
 "Who's dat, knockin on dat door?"
 "Who's dat, says, who's dat, when I says, who's dat?"
 You must hear Bud and Sam talk about taking the quiet out to dinner and what game of cards can you play with a queen out of the deck?
 How low is French cheating?
 Don't take this record.

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"What-Cha-Do-Dat-Fer"
 Combie Dialog—Bud and Sam
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AT THE STANDARD
 Gibney's Standard theater, the work at Sept. 24, 1934, presented the bill "What-Cha-Do-Dat-Fer" by Bud and Sam. The show was a big feature photograph, a comedy featuring "Katie" Taylor, a male drama of romance and thrills, was very good. The bill Phil Harris presented Billy Mitchell's "Broadway" review. A feature play by Blanche Rice, and James H. Thompson, was very good and played for an encore. The show and its high entertaining value he thought it his duty to return the disposal of the Siles Green show whenever they visit Burwell. Mail Miss. Oct. 1.

THE PHIL CHESBROUGH DEADLINE TEST
 The Phil Cheshbrough deadline test, a comedy play by Blanche Rice, and James H. Thompson, was very good and played for an encore. The show and its high entertaining value he thought it his duty to return the disposal of the Siles Green show whenever they visit Burwell. Mail Miss. Oct. 1.

ALEX HILL IN 'EM
 The popular pianist, Alex Hill, is living in Chicago and wants to hear friends in different parts of the country. He is a future musician in "Jimmy" Wicks of each little publisher at the second piano and is causing him to self-sufficiency a bit of attention to the Windy City.

HELLO GANG!
 Harry W. Miller, pianist of Dallas, is a three-day musician at the Lincoln theater, Shreveport, La., and is now playing the Chicago, Col. The gang to write him at Box 214, Station A, Dallas, Texas.

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THE TEXAS EASY STREET BLUES
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FOLK-SONG AND FOLK-POETRY AS FOUND IN THE
SECULAR SONGS OF THE SOUTHERN NEGROES

BY HOWARD W. ODUM

AN examination of the first twenty volumes of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, and a study of the published folk-songs of the Southern negroes, reveal a large amount of valuable material for the student of folk-songs and ballads. Investigation of the field indicates a still larger supply of songs as yet not collected or published. Unfortunately the collection of these songs has been permitted to lapse within recent years, although there is no indication that even a majority have been collected. In fact, the supply seems almost inexhaustible, and the present-day negro folk-songs appear to be no less distinctive than formerly. It is hoped that special efforts will be made by as many persons as possible to contribute to the negro department of American folk-lore as many of the songs of the Southern negroes as can be obtained. That they are most valuable to the student of sociology and anthropology, as well as to the student of literature and the ballad, will scarcely be doubted.

Two distinct classes of folk-songs have been, and are, current among the Southern negroes, — the religious songs, or "spirituals," and the social or secular songs. An examination of the principal collections of negro songs, a list of which is appended at the end of this paper, shows that emphasis has been placed heretofore upon the religious songs, although the secular songs appear to be equally as interesting and valuable. My study of negro folk-songs included originally the religious and secular songs of the Southern negroes; analysis of their content; a discussion of the mental imagery, style and habit, reflected in them; and the word-vocabulary of the collection of songs. The religious songs have already been published in the *American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education* (vol. iii, pp. 265-365). In order to bring this paper within the scope and limits of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, it has been necessary to omit the introductory discussion of the songs, for the most part, and to omit entirely the

THE "BLUES" AS FOLK-SONGS

BY DOROTHY SCARBOROUGH

There are fashions in music as in anything else, and folk-song presents no exception to the rule. For the last several years the most popular type of Negro song has been that peculiar, barbaric sort of melody called "blues," with its irregular rhythm, its lagging briskness, its mournful liveliness of tone. It has a jerky tempo, as of a cripple dancing because of some irresistible impulse. A "blues" (or does one say a "blue?"—what is the grammar of the thing?) likes to end its stanza abruptly, leaving the listener expectant for more, though, of course, there is no fixed law about it. One could scarcely imagine a convention of any kind in connection with this negroid free music. It is partial to the three-line stanza instead of the customary one of four or more, and it ends with a high note that has the effect of incompleteness. The close of a stanza comes with a shock like the whip-crack surprise at the end of an O. Henry story, for instances—a cheap trick, but effective as a novelty. Blues sing of themes remote from those of the old spirituals, and their incompleteness of stanza makes the listener gasp, and perhaps fancy that the censor has deleted the other line.

Blues, being widely published as sheet music in the North as well as the South, and sung in vaudeville everywhere, would seem to have little relation to authentic folk-music of the Negroes. But in studying the question, I had a feeling that it was more or less connected with Negro folk-song, and I tried to trace it back to its origin.

Negroes and white people in the South referred me to W. C. Handy as the man who had put the bluing in the blues. But how to locate him was a problem. He had started this indigo music in Memphis, it appeared, but was there no longer. I heard of him as having been in Chicago, and in Philadelphia, and at last as being in New York. Inquiries from musicians brought out the fact that Handy is now manager of a music publishing company, of which he is part owner, Page and Handy, and so my collaborator, Ola Gullledge, and I went to see him at his place.

To my question, "Have blues any relation to Negro folk-song?" Handy replied instantly, "Yes, they are folk-music."

"BOB WILLS IS STILL THE KING":

ROMANTIC REGIONALISM AND CONVERGENT CULTURE IN CENTRAL TEXAS

By Nicholas R. Spitzer

The romantic uses of folklore on the part of writers, poets and academicians is a familiar theme in American culture. From Walt Whitman to John Lomax and J. Frank Dobie, the interest in folklore collection, collation and representation has vacillated between objective scholarship and the desire to build a literature based on folk roots (see Bluestein, 1972). In the United States it was and is ironic that as intellectuals and the new middle class began to take up the folk aesthetic from the 1920s on in a variety of ways, from Leadbelly's music to Ben Botkins' *Treasures*, the folk (black, white and ethnic) have often looked to mainstream acceptance, acculturation and a chance to get on the "folk-urban-suburban continuum." In hill-billy music, for example, the growth of Nashville is associated with a demise in regional styles (see Malone, 1968).

In the post-Vietnam era, unlike earlier post-war eras and other periods producing nationalistic feelings and art forms, there is less of a sense of national correctness or agreement. As we experience what some have called a search for community (i. e., not on the national level), or more metaphysically, a "turning inward", various cultural traits, often regional and ethnic in nature, are being consciously resurrected and reasserted.

In Central Texas, with Austin as its focal point, I dub this tendency *romantic regionalism*. It coincides most closely with what rural sociologist Howard W. Odum called "literary and aesthetic regionalism" (see Odum and Moore, 1938). However, in Austin, the expressive culture that comes most readily under this aegis is not "high art" or popular written literature. Rather, it is the folk-based popular art of country and western musical performance that is pre-eminent. This music in various forms has served as an expressive cultural bridge reflecting the convergence of socio-economically diverse elements of the population.

Interest in country and western music has

not always been fashionable for the youth and student community, many of whom come from middle class backgrounds which they often reject. At the same time the lower class, rural affiliated "cedar choppers", "goat ropers", "kickers", and "rednecks" (I will use these terms interchangeably), have clung ambivalently to their rurality as expressed in part by the creation of rural suburbias where the hard-core country and western club is now found in a shopping center.

Of the consciously cosmopolitan Austin youth, many of whom were recruited from rural Texas by the University, psychedelic rock, urban folk music and rock 'n' roll, were the forms most subscribed to in terms of expressive self-identity. This youthful population has, since the early 1970s, been seizing upon the image, style and content, of Texas country and western music (with an emphasis on *western*) and fusing it with rock and pop music. The musical forms - and by association, lifestyles - resulting have been variously called "cosmic cowboy," "red neck hip" and "progressive country." These forms are part of, and comment upon, the strongly self-referrent regional romantic movement.

It must be emphasized that despite the rise of this hybrid music and cultural romanticism among the student-oriented youth, the rural kickers were not initially drawn into accepting the music or the long-haired-cowboy-hat-wearers who sought out shotgun-racked old pickup trucks, drank beer and smoked marijuana under the code of the "neon (or is it 'neo') cowboy." Ironically, many rural people were and are in no sense occupational cowboys themselves; yet they too have historically used the image in defining their lifestyles. Indeed, Bob Wills' music itself reflects the Western imagery of Hollywood rather than the oral and cultural traditions of real cowboys.

These "real" rednecks have been sparse at large local outdoor festivals such as Willie Nelson's 4th of July picnic. The first of such events in 1973 found a larger percentage of rural people in attendance than in subsequent years, due most likely to the more traditional line of

commercial country and western stars on the bill and an unawareness of the transformation of Willie Nelson from Nashville stalwart to bearded renegade. In the following years the event, attracting from thirty to seventy thousand fans, has taken on more and more the ambiance of a rock festival. This includes a high degree of alternately dusty and muddy incommodiousness, more country-rock and hippies, less country music and kickers.

This is not to say that the music preferred by the rednecks is unromantic (and here I'm referring to Nashville country as well as the earlier Texas-Oklahoma honky-tonk stylings of Milton Brown and his Brownies, Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, The Cowboy Ramblers, and in later years, Ernest Tubb, Johnny Bush and Darrel McCall). Quite the contrary, it is equally nostalgic and self-referential since for many of them, their nostalgia is rooted in the actual experience of leaving the farm, ranch or rural situation. As such it parallels contemporary youthful rural romanticism. This similarity is crucial. The respect for the past implied on the part of the youth culture and the shared, dare I say, neo-populist ambivalence about urban/suburban America has brought acceptance of country-rock on the part of the rural or newly suburbanized redneck. However, this process has been more gradual than the youth-affiliated regional country and western fan magazines such as *Picking Up the Tempo* would indicate (see Commercial Music Graphics #34 in the previous issue of *JEMFO*). Further, rural acceptance of pop-oriented music and cultural style is not really new in Texas; it goes back to the rockabilly era of Buddy Holly and Roy Orbison, and earlier to Jimmie Rodgers -- perhaps the first eclectic cosmic cowboy.

Indicative of the latest and farthest degree of cultural interpenetration is the song "Bob Wills is Still the King," recorded live at the now defunct Texas Opry House in Austin (it moved to Houston). The song was the first of its kind to be "number one" on the local country Top-40 station (KVET-AM) as well as the FM progressive country station (KOKE-FM). That is, it defies the categories of hard-core and progressive country. Based on record sales it fulfills both genres. The song is sung by Waylon Jennings, whose initial audience had been the fans of hard-core or "straight" country music. Admittedly, Waylon has always defied labels. He was a member of Buddy Holly's Crickets, and in recent years, by utilizing his image as a rock and rolling Nashville rebel, in apparent cahoots with Willie Nelson, he has augmented his following with the young hip to a large degree.

Lyrically the song toughly espouses the virtues of Texas life in the nostalgic terms of

cowboy self-reliance and chivalry. Further, it invokes an animistic fashion, a past regional hero as the basis for present day self-pride. Wills incidently is historically more associated with Fort Worth and Tulsa, than Austin; but it is the interpretation of the past on the part of the present cultural configuration that is of interest here, not the attempt at an objective account of history.

The musical style is that of country-rock not western swing, although it is based on an amalgam of Nashville country, rockabilly and western swing. The rhythm is a slow and almost ponderous rock tempering of conventional upbeat country. If any one instrument carries the old western sound here it is the steel guitar, since this, the fiddle and horn sections (optional), were its mainstays. Here a harmonica is added to the overall modern sound to evoke the popular image of the Chisholm Trail campfire. The aesthetic synthesis is complex, reflecting the varied audience tastes reached. Relating more directly to the performance event at which it was recorded, is the vague, but all inclusive use of the introductory phrase "our kind of music" to establish rapport with the varied concert-goers. Below is a transcription of the lyrics from the LP *Dreaming My Dreams*.

(Cheers and Music)

Spoken: Here's a song I wrote on a place between Dallas and Austin...goin' to El Paso...whoops... No, this is what gave us the idea to come down here. This is a song about a guy who probably did as much for our kind of music as anybody... (cheers).

Singing: Well the honky tonks in Texas were my natural second home,
Where you tip your hat to the ladies and the Rose of San Antone.
I grew up on music that we called western swing.
It don't matter who's in Austin, Bob Wills is still the king. (cheers)

Lord, I can still remember the way things were back then.
In spite of all the hard times, I'd live it all again.
To hear the Texas Playboys and Tommy Duncan sing
Makes me proud to be from Texas where Bob Wills is still the king. (cheers)

You can hear the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee.
It's the home of country music, on that we all agree.
But when you cross that old Red River hõss, it just don't mean a thing.
Once you're down in Texas, Bob Wills is still the king. (cheers)

Well if you ain't ever been there, I guess you ain't been told.
 You just can't live in Texas unless you got a lot of soul. (cheers)
 It's the home of Willie Nelson (cheers). It's the home of western swing.
 He'll be the first to tell you: Bob Wills is still the king. (cheers)

-- Waylon Jennings

In relation to the function of popular culture artists and art forms in shaping an expanded sense of community and cultural contiguity, I should point out that Waylon Jennings, based on the lyrics of many of his songs is a symbolic, normative outlaw. Country and western music is rife with them as fantasy characters providing *honorable* ways to break the law. His power as a performer for Austin audiences is further amplified in his rebellion from Nashville. That is, he also iconically represents an outlaw of sorts. A supplementary example of a non-normative outlaw in relation to this "outlaw community" of Austin would be Kinky Friedman, the existential Jewish cowboy. He goes beyond mere Texas/cowboy male chauvanism by performing extremely satirical material like "Get Your Biscuits in the Oven and Your Buns in the Bed." He also violates an Austin taboo by singing "The Ballad of Charles Whitman" as a humorous song. Kinky refuses to be considered part of the "Austin scene" and makes only rare appearances in the town -- interestingly he is one of the few new Texas-linked performers actually from Austin. In a sense, by being outside it, he helps define the community of new "good ole boys" (see my interview with Kinky Friedman in *Picking Up the Tempo*, July 1975).

Apart from Kinky's aberrations and Waylon Jennings' ability to bridge cultural aesthetics, another element of the romantic movement is the clamoring for authenticity -- for something that is real. This is not unlike the "purist" advocates of the urban folk movement in the early 1960s. In the recording of "Bob Wills is Still the King", the loud and continuous audience response is indicative of one behavioral manifestation of this authenticity-oriented attitude. The crowd hoots and hollers on cue in a manner that from participant-observation I would describe as self-conscious. That is, they are themselves performing in the fashion presumed to be truly Texan. If the boisterous, independent Texan is the stereotype from earlier years (see Fehrenbach, 1975), they have chosen to accept it and, in so doing, to invert the negative stereotype to a source of pride and self-referential declaration (for a related phenomenon see Green's discussion of the hill-billy, 1965).

The musical result of a search for authenticity has produced a number of bands that recreate the western style. They perform the old songs like "San Antonio Rose" and "Bubbles in My Beer" as well as their own material with new lyrics that localize and update old themes. The performance style emphasizes a strong band leader reminiscent of Bob Wills, chomping on a cigar, pointing out solos and adding jive commentary. The word text below of "Don't Ask Me Why I'm Going to Texas" is performed by Asleep at the Wheel, a group that sought out the growing Austin community after leaving Berkeley. They have since had success elsewhere and play in various styles besides western swing (big band, Kansas City hot jazz, Fifties Honky-Tonk and Nashville country). This song is not pure western swing itself (if such a thing exists). It draws heavily on the Hank Thompson sound found especially in the steel guitar signature. Musically, the song also contains quotations from "The Eyes of Texas" and "San Antonio Rose". Lyrically, the regional feeling is evident in its use of place names as well as the bringing together of "Bob Wills, Bill Mack (of WBAP, Ft. Worth) and me on radio...". The young singer is able to cross the barriers of time and culture by having his music on the mystical medium of Texas radio.

Don't ask me why I'm goin' to Texas, cause the reason I just don't know.
 I've got a little gal in Houston, and I've got lots of friends in San Antone.

Don't ask me why I'm goin' to Texas, why in all the world am I here.

I do love to hear those Texas fiddles, dance and sing and drink my Lone Star Beer.

From Austin up to Dallas, Amarillo to El Paso, you can hear Bob Wills, Bill Mack and me, on your radio.

Don't ask me why I'm goin' to Texas, it's just the kind of place I should be.

Yeah there's a lot of room beneath that southern moon,
 Texas you're a good ole state by me.

(repeat last two verses).

--Ray Benson, Leroy Preston, K. Farrell

Asleep at the Wheel has played with many of the older western swing artists like Bob Wills' fiddler, Jesse Ashlock, and singer/songwriter of the late 1940s, Floyd Tillman. Speaking of the band, Ashlock says: "They are very good, but they play from the head. We played from the heart, for the people. They play more for other musicians." This gives us some clue to the self-consciously romantic nature of the new music. Floyd Tillman

adds: "They're like the old bands, but with a difference, they play take off solos. That's more like rock. Still I love 'em or I wouldn't play with 'em. They've moved the music back into the dance hall where it belongs." This last comment is particularly telling because it indicates the context in which most of the convergence in Austin expressive popular culture takes place - the play area of the dance hall or the honky-tonk bar. It is the traditional kicker setting for license. Western swing as dance music has thus been for more effective in bringing the diverse groups together of late than the cosmic cowboy music or urban folk/rock tempered styles. These latter genres do not encourage as much overt participation in dance; and the dancing that accompanies them is more free form. Also, they do not satisfy the aesthetic sensibilities of the rural kicker lyrically or musically.

Most importantly, it is socially easier for the youthful participants of the eclectic romantic regional popular culture to enter the redneck honky-tonk to enjoy the hard-core music and dance old style, than it is for the rural person to attend the outdoor country-rock concert or a massive youth-oriented club like Armadillo World Headquarters.

The new long-haired rednecks seem to be playing out their fantasies of a simple self-reliant life in the face of a modern, complex, often unrewarding society. They do this in a variety of ways, including cultivating old dances and music, eulogizing the poor white trash, dumping the equally faddish liberal-tinged ecology movement and adopting conservative rhetoric. Regarding the last two points, note the outdoor concert poster's juxtaposition of long hair, the shotgun rack and a beer bottle tossed into nature (Figure #1).

In terms of costumery, long hair and cowboy clothes have become fairly meaningless as markers of cultural identity in Austin, since kickers often have long hair while some of the new rednecks now have short hair. However, the kicker is still less likely to wear a rhinestone encrusted shirt and more likely to have a John Deere cap than a cowboy hat.

Where the romantic redneck has often left middle class culture behind, at least superficially, the rural-oriented lower classes now have a wide range of choice in cultural models between middle class mainstream culture and a new reasserted vision of their own, thanks to the massive youth culture with which they have contact. The depth of value and behavior change on the part of the redneck is difficult to

assess and demands extensive survey work. It is readily apparent that the youthful cosmic cowboy utilizes primarily surface cultural traits (short hair, conservative rhetoric, pickup truck, cowboy clothes) to show his new affinities without sacrificing his deeper values (reflected behaviorally in: cohabitation of unmarried couples, acceptance of drug use, lack of church affiliation, election of a liberal mayor in a recent election). As one extreme example of shifting redneck values, one can see homosexuals dancing unmolested next to kickers in a formerly hard-core country and western club.

Austin's musical popular culture telescopes time and geography. This makes it a particularly effective means of providing a sense of community because performers of the earlier periods are side by side with the contemporaries. Recently the original Texas Playboys (with some exceptions) were regrouped in Austin with great success at a formerly all redneck dance hall. They were on a double bill with a recreating band called Alvin Crow and the Pleasant Valley Boys. (Here the poster - Figure #2 - is significant in its use of a graphic style associated with "New Left" cartoonists to convey the message about a country and western event). Even the earlier Jimmie Rodgers era is well represented by exalted local old-timers such as Kenneth Threadgill and Bill Neely, both of whom learned the Blue Yodeler's material from records and recreate his style and songs. Jesse Ashlock incidentally has taken to jamming with Neely at his weekly club jobs.

Recreation, tradition, commercialization, improvisation and the resultant hybridization, are the dynamic forces interacting to create a regionally significant art form. Or perhaps more accurately, a number of forms all under the label of country music. Not all of these are "progressive country", but what is evident is a *progressive attitude* towards all of the genres (progressive country, hard-core country, Nashville country, MOR country, western swing, honky-tonk, country-rock, rockabilly, old-time country, cosmic cowboy, redneck rock) on the part of formerly diverse audiences. It is at the musical events (in bars, dancehalls, concert-halls, and outdoor festivals) that intensive culture contact, convergence and change has taken place. The role of the performer in providing such expressive culture through which new social structure can emerge is essential. Whether western swing performer, hard-core country artist, re-creator, cosmic cowboy, or a synthesis of these types, their performance lies within and gives meaning to a matrix of acculturation and self-conscious romanticism that have long been the paradoxical mainstay of country and western music (see Green, 1965). In the suburban and rural areas in and around Austin, Texas, the mythopoeic past is contiguous with the present.

(Note: Permission to quote lyrics has been requested.)

Genuine Texas Swing
 WITH MEMBERS OF THE
ORIGINAL TEXAS PLAYBOYS
 INCLUDING:
 LEON MAULIFFE, LEON RAUSCH, AL STRICKLIN, KEITH COLEMAN,
 SMOKEY DACUS, JESSE ASHLOCK, TOMMY AINSUP & SLEEPY JOHNSON
along with
ALVIN CROW
 AND THE **PLEASANT VALLEY BOYS**
 \$5.00 AT THE DOOR
 @ 3201 S. LAMAR
 NO ADVANCE TICKETS
 NO RESERVATIONS
 COME EARLY

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we seen it right here didnt we?
 michael priest 1975

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-- University of Texas, Austin

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SHREVEPORT
STANS RECORDS 728 TEXAS
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TEXAS PINEWOODS 8
MILES EAST OF NACOG
DOCHES ON HWY 21
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SOUND BY LONE STAR

TEXAS
LONE STAR
CROSS COUNTRY CONCERT
KINKY FRIEDMAN
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RED BRAD

THE
MICHAEL JAMES
BAND
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AL STRICKLAND
LEON RAUSH
JESSE ASHLOCK
SLEEPY JOHNSON
IRA NELSON (WILLIE FATHER)

PIANO
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TENOR BAND
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ZORRO
& THE
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A SINGING COWBOY'S FAN CLUB OF THE 1940s AND EARLY 1950s: REMINISCENCES FROM RAY WHITLEY'S FAN CLUB PRESIDENTS

By Gerald F. Vaughn

[A slang term of uncertain origin, the word "fan" has been used since before the turn of the century. Initially it found greatest use in sports: a baseball fan was an enthusiast almost fanatical (perhaps the origin?) in his devotion to the sport. Who was the first personality to be adulated by a formalized club of fans? When was that club formed? Who was the first country singer to have a fan club? These are provocative questions that lurk in the shadows of Gerald F. Vaughn's account of the fan club of singing movie cowboy, Ray Whitley. Of all the aspects of the many-faceted country music business, the fan club has been one of the most neglected in the studies of recent years. Some of the reasons for this are implied in the following pages: the ephemeral nature of the club itself, its members, and its publications make the task of documentation exceedingly difficult. Few, if any, public libraries receive and/or maintain runs of fan club magazines. How many clubs have there been? How many publications issued? How many of them have been preserved? These questions will doubtless go unanswered for some time.]

Supporting every important entertainer is a legion of exceptional fans who band together as a fan club. The fan clubs of the singing cowboys of the 1940's and '50 are of special interest, as they set the pattern for country-western music fan clubs to this day.

Illustrative of such activity was the fan club of Ray Whitley, popular singing cowboy in the movies and top composer of western songs. Ray starred in musical western short subjects for the RKO film studio from 1937 to 1942 and co-starred in the western feature series of George O'Brien, Tim Holt, and Rod Cameron.

Ray was a versatile talent whose energies went in many directions. He was a renowned composer ("Back in the Saddle Again," "I Hang My Head and Cry," and other hits) and recording artist ("I Saw Your Face in the Moon" was his best-known record). In 1944-45 his "Rhythm Wranglers" dance band was the chief rival to Bob Wills and Spade Cooley in western swing. Ray was a "super salesman on stage," in the words of Johnny Bond, and second only to Tex Ritter at one time in personal appearances. He managed the Sons of the Pioneers and Jimmy Wakely and also was an executive with Gene Autry's music publishing and record companies.

Fan club records of the 1940s and early 1950 and earlier are sketchy at best. There has been little documentation on the dimensions and inner-workings of country music fan clubs. However, country music fan clubs are rarely

found to be large in membership. Even with today's phenomenal country music popularity, a superstar like Bill Anderson has 1,500 members and the typical country performer's club reportedly is around 1,000 members. Ray's fan club membership grew to around 500, comparable to the Eddy Arnold fan club at that time, according to Mary Keohand (nee Cain), one of the former presidents of the Ray Whitley Fan Club and also a member of Eddy Arnold's, among others.

The Ray Whitley Fan Club was initiated by fans alone. Ray did not become aware of or take part in his club's activity until around 1947, yet the club had been underway and may have started around the time of his peak popularity in films and recordings. The RKO studio had been deluged with Ray's fan mail prior to 1940. Louise Grosso was a teenager in New York City and a member of Ray's fan club when, in 1947, she was asked by Eileen Johnson (then president) whether she would like to become president. Louise had met Ray in 1945 when he performed at New York's Bellevue Hospital. She eagerly accepted the presidency.

The fan club's membership was nationwide, with members eventually in about half the states. However, activity centered in the New York and Boston areas where Ray was especially popular due to his annual World Championship Rodeo appearances in those cities each fall for over twenty years. Over the years Ray lived in both New York and Boston and had radio programs in each city.

During Louise's presidency dues were set at

\$1.00 a year per member, and were unchanged throughout the club's existence. Each member was entitled to four issues yearly of the fan club journal. Louise's journal was called first "Ray's Round Up," then changed to "Ray's Ranch Hands." Ray wrote letters to Louise for her use in the journals. In addition to the regular members, the fan club had honorary members who were almost a "Who's Who" of movies and country-western music. They included Alan Ladd, Olivia De Havilland, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, Jimmy Wakely, Elton Britt, Johnny Bond, Rosalie Allen, Jesse Rogers, Pee Wee Miller, and Shorty and Smokey Warren.

Ray was happy to help in any way the club desired, despite his extremely crowded schedule (travelling full-time on personal appearances across the nation). He no longer was starring at a movie studio and, without access to the large staff, could not hope to service a massive fan club like Gene Autry's or Roy Roger's. But in the late 1940s Ray was touring extensively, and his fans could see and visit with him in person more readily. This added to fan club interest. Any time Ray was performing in the Northeast, the concentration of New York and Boston fans would go wherever he was appearing - New Yorkers to Boston, Bostonians to New York, both groups to Philadelphia, etc.

Receiving Louise's first issue of "Ray's Round Up," Ray wrote her the following letter of appreciation on 18 January 1948:

Dear Louise:

Received first copy of Ray's Round Up. It really looks fine, and you have done a very nice job. I am very lucky and grateful to have a friend such as you.

Keep up the good work, we appreciate it no end. Kindest personal regards to you, your mother, and family.

Sincerely,

Ray

On 21 March 1949, with the club making good progress, Ray wrote this delightful letter for Louise to put in the journal:

Dear Louise:

Well, here it is the first day of spring, you know the old saying 'Spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of Love.' I always think of

you, and the rest of my club members, the many things you have done for me, the way the club membership turned out to the last party at N. Y. last October. There is nothing to take the place of loyalty, and I am ever grateful to all the members of the Ray Whitley fan club. I will be in the east this summer and will let you know in plenty of time to bring the membership together again for another swell party. Kindest regards to the grandest bunch of friends a fellow ever had.

Sincerely,

Ray Whitley

The *piece de resistance* of the fan club's activity in those years was the grand parties Louise held for Ray when he came to New York for the rodeo. Ray always kept one night open during the rodeo for the fan club party. He and wife Kay wouldn't have missed them for the world. Fans would come from considerable distances - Massachusetts, Philadelphia, upstate New York - to show their love for Ray and enjoy one of Louise's bashes. The place would be jammed with club members, and some of Ray's show business buddies also would come, such as Johnny Bond, Frankie Marvin, Jerry Scoggins, Carl Cotner, and Jesse Rogers, as well as rodeo riders, ropers, and announcers. One year the party was held at Nola Studios, another year at the Forrest Hotel where Ray stayed while in New York. There was feasting on the biggest cake imaginable as well as many other goodies; singing; and in general a wonderful evening with their hero. One time they all went with Ray over to WOV and visited Rosalie Allen who, with Ray as her guest, broadcast her nighttime radio show.

When Louise and her family went to see Ray perform away from New York City, he and Kay took care of them like kin. Louise recalls when the Grosso's went to Boston for the rodeo - afterward Ray took Louise, her parents, and two brothers out for a sumptuous roast beef dinner. Louise remembers another day when she called Ray at his hotel, and he asked her to come over because Kay had a little something for her. When Louise arrived Kay gave her a beautiful pink satin blouse and pair of her black cowgirl boots, which made Louise very happy. Ray and Kay have deep affection and appreciation for Louise. They made certain Louise and her family had free passes each year for the rodeo, and they recall the great Italian cooking they enjoyed at Louise's home.

In about 1951 a crisis arose that put the fan club's leadership to the test, and they rallied to Ray's aid. When Ray performed at the Boston rodeo,

he also did radio shows over WMEX. Those radio shows drew such an enormous volume of Ray Whitley fan mail at the station that drastic action was needed to avert an avalanche. Hundreds of letters already had to be answered, and most were inquiries about joining the fan club or similar things a fan club president normally would handle. The letters were in Boston, and Mary Keohane, one of Ray's most ardent club members, lived in Boston, so it made sense to shift that club presidency to Boston. Mary would become president and try to cope with this surge of letters. This was a delicate problem that Ray wishes he had resolved better. Mary already was president of two fan clubs for local talent which she would have to give up, as a nationwide club and two local clubs would be an impossible load. She had the equipment (her own mimeograph machine) and experience, and Ray was number one with her; she couldn't refuse the honor. However, Louise had faithfully presided over the club, and Ray didn't want to hurt her feelings in any way. After considerable discussion about what to do, it was agreed that prompt action was essential. Ray would explain it to Louise and ask her understanding...and Louise remains as true to Ray today as ever. Still Ray regrets the disruption this caused for both Mary and Louise.

Mary had been a fan club member for several years and went to New York for Louise's marvelous parties. She would take an early morning train from Boston, return on the midnight "sleeper," and go directly to work...without much sleep but overjoyed. Her father was a movie operator, so she always knew when one of Ray's movies would be shown. It didn't cost her anything to go to the RKO-Keith Boston, and she saw all of Ray's films repeatedly. She kept an eagle eye open for Ray's shorts at the short subjects theaters and saw them a few times more.

Ray announced over WMEX that Mary had the club now, and this brought in even more letters - around 25-50 a week. Soon her house was stacked high with paper. Her hand-cranked mimeograph machine fairly flew, and the ink was so messy newspapers had to be spread all over.

Members now received a membership card, an autographed photo of Ray, and four journal issues a year (each containing 15-25 pages). The journal now was called "Ray's Ramblers." Mary designed her own covers of various colors, wrote a news letter, included a letter from Ray if his schedule permitted, ran articles sent in by members, gave news of other western stars -- sometimes with letters from them, and there were snapshots too (often a cover photo and three or four inside). Mary would allow presidents of fan clubs for other artists to write

about their stars in her journals, and in return she wrote about Ray in their journals. Mary found this very useful in obtaining new members.

Mary's journals were among the neatest and most professional of any produced for stars at that time, and she received many compliments. The journals were so elaborate that the membership dues did not cover their cost, but Mary put the same devotion and energy into her journals that Louise had put into the parties. If copies could only be found today, how welcome they would be. Mary also had a letterhead printed for her correspondence. She had state representatives in as many states as possible, who were responsible for obtaining new members and answering correspondence in their states, which she found was quite effective.

In early 1952 Ray and Kay stated in Boston after the previous fall's rodeo, as Ray became host of "Ray Whitley Country Style" -- a program on WMEX that rivalled Arthur Godfrey's show in the local ratings. Mary recalls she would stop by WMEX and have coffee and a doughnut with Ray on her way to work in the morning. She kept a portable radio in her desk so she could listen when the program came on at 8:15 A. M. Ray was delighted at Mary's progress with the club and one morning asked her to stay a few minutes and talk about the fan club over the air. Mary did and was late for work, but who cared?...all they could do was fire her, she says! To her, helping Ray was the most important thing in the world.

In Boston, Mary and her sister helped Ray during night broadcasts at the rodeo. Ray always got them free passes, and with Kay they would take phone calls from people calling in requests for songs. They were so busy they didn't get to see or hear much of the program themselves, but she has never forgotten the fun of those days and nights.

Mary recalls how concerned Ray was about her, as he was about Louise, when she travelled long distances late at night after seeing him perform. Once when Mary came to New York to see Ray, he called her home in Boston at 3:00 A. M. the next morning to be sure she returned safely. Mary recalls another unexpected phone call from Ray. One night after she had gone to sleep, the phone rang and her mother awoke her saying she had a call from Nashville. Mary thought it was a mistake until a familiar voice was heard on the line. Ray told her he was in Nashville and appearing on a radio show that very moment -- he was talking with her on the air! Mary was flabbergasted, but she managed to talk a few minutes with him about his broadcasts in Boston and various people.

Since Mary's dad was in the theater business, he and she met numerous stars -- actors, actresses, singers, and band leaders. Not all of them appreciated their fans or fan clubs. Many did not take their fan clubs seriously. Some merely tolerated fans, and others "couldn't be bothered" at all. Mary and Louise found Ray to be in a class by himself -- the same fine person they pictured him to be from his screen appearances. This is why they were willing to do anything they possibly could for him to aid his career.

Ray still thinks of Louise, Mary, and all the other loyal fans who have helped him, and is grateful to them. Ray and Kay have continued to correspond with Louise and Mary all these many years since those busy but beautiful fan club days.

Ray's performing career closed for the most part when the singing cowboy era ended in the mid 1950s, and the fan club ceased. He is retired in Granada Hills, California, and is often an honored guest at reunions of stars in country-western music and western movies.

-- Newark, Delaware



Ray Whitley and fans at fan club party, New York, October 1947.



Above, l to r: Ray Whitley, former fanclub president, Mary Cain (now Keohane), Jimmy Wakely (1949). Below: Ray Whitley and former fanclub president Louise Grosso at New Jersey personal appearance, 24 August 1953.

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Compiled and Annotated by Michael Mendelson

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BOOK REVIEWS

VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAINS collected and recorded by Guy and Candie Carawan (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975); xiv + 232 pp., illustrated; cloth \$15, paper \$8.)

For every social issue there are several ways in which an individual's consciousness can be raised to an understanding of that issue. Methodical study of all the "available literature" on the subject most often results in a slowly-built intellectual and objective realization and conception. On the other hand, direct exposure to (or participation in) the circumstances comprising the issue usually brings about the much more immediate, instant "gut level" identification and understanding, oftentimes accompanied by an emotional impetus to engage oneself in action related to the issue.

It is a rare written or literary depiction that, alone, can impart this second type of deep-seated understanding of a social reality to whomever may be exposed to it. Yet, in dealing with the specific subject of the Appalachian South, *Voices from the Mountains* manages to move the reader quickly to that instant of visceral awareness and identification with Appalachian mountain life and its related struggles, joys, strengths and sorrows. This is one of the highest compliments that can be paid a piece of literature.

Guy and Candie Carawan have worked for years in the subject areas of music and social change, and in the geographic area of Appalachia. Guy is music director of the Highlander Center in New Market, Tennessee, and together, the couple has produced many fine documentary albums and books (among them *Ain't You Got a Right to the Tree of Life* and *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle*). To date, *Voices from the Mountains* is the best of these documentations. It effectively juxtaposes photographs, songs, and quotations to present a thorough impression of various aspects of South eastern mountain life. Seven chapter headings take the names of included songs, each chapter being a tight thematic unit of photos, songs and text.

The emphasis on the mining industry is immediately apparent and to be expected, coal mining being the main occupation and determinant of lifestyle in Appalachia. Life-sustainer and life-robber both, coal mining has rightfully become the focal social issue in Appalachia; something which takes so much from the people and the land, yet gives so very little back cannot go unchallenges. Thus, the creative vehemence aimed against mining (so apparent in *Voices from the Mountains* in the form of well-crafted song and spoken word) is not at all surprising. It is the natural outgrowth of years of dealing or strongly identifying with occupational and life circumstances which provide minimal sustenance for maximum human output, and in addition, robs life both quickly (as in mine disasters) and slowly (as in black lung); either way, brutally.

The songwriters represented in *Voices from the Mountains* range from Sarah Ogan Gunning to Hazel Dickens to John Prine to Ruthie Gorton, which is to name representative individuals within a spectrum covering natives of Appalachia, those with only relatives from the area, and those who don't hail from the area at all but feel an intense enough identification with the Appalachian people and their living circumstances to write and sing about them.

The songs, themselves, are the best. Some will be familiar to most readers, such as Jean Ritchie's "Black Waters" and John Prine's "Paradise" (now a current Lynn Anderson hit on AM country radio). Others are less well-known, but none-the-less and powerful songs about mining. Some of the songs are effective topical rewrites; specifically, Carawan's "Sowin' on the Mountain" and Gunning's "Dreadful Memories".

The photographs in *Voices from the Mountains* are a telling assortment of candid Appalachian portraiture, showing not only the human condition, but the shape of the land there, and what is being done to it. They are well-chosen and placed effectively within the book, and many of them are used on the attractive outside cover in a glossy pictorial collage. The book has that ideal kind of layout which lends itself either to cursory perusing, or to serious cover-to-cover reading, and the aesthetics of the volume are further enhanced by its binding at the short side (rather than at the usual long side), giving one the feeling of looking at a photograph album.

The foreword (written by Mike Clark of the Highlander Center) is brief, informative, and well-written, and the Carawans had the good sense to include a selective discography and bibliography (which includes films) and a section of notes to the quotations used in the text. These touches make *Voices from the Mountains* an excellent scholarly reference, in addition to being a book to be read only for entertainment or inspiration.

Although, it has not been the usual policy for the *JEMF Quarterly* to review phonograph records, in this instance mention should be made of one. Intentionally produced to accompany *Voices from the Mountains*, the lp *Come All You Coal Miners* (Rounder 4005) contains a sampling of songs from *VFM* performed by Hazel Dickens, George Tucker, Nimrod Workman and Sara Gunning. Most of the material was recorded at an October 1972 Appalachian Music Workshop held at the Highlander Center. What makes *Come All You Coal Miners* such an important and complementary adjunct to *VFM*; however, is not only the songs, but the use of talking (presumably recorded at that same Highlander Workshop) between song cuts. There are some very moving speeches by Nimrod Workman in particular.

The portrayal of any minority requires care to avoid condescension on the one hand and dieification on the other, especially during these times of liberal token attention and lip-service-charity to recognized oppressed-depressed groups. And the presentation of a candid, yet sympathetic portrait of the Appalachian South, in particular, requires even more skill, since the Anglo-Saxon Southern White is fast becoming the new socially recognized minority, receiving a good amount of recent literary/media attention. In both their book and their lp, Guy and Candie Carawan have been able to achieve the delicate balance between sentiment and intellect. It is in this balance, I believe that a written/recorded work can impart that air of specially-charged realism capable of bringing listeners and readers around very quickly, if not emotionally, to seeing and feeling just what the lifestyle, problems, hardships and everyday struggles of a people are. As mentioned in the beginning, only the best in literature can achieve this.

-- Patty Hall
Country Music Foundation,
Nashville, Tenn.

A REGIONAL DISCOGRAPHY OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, 1904-1972. Compiled, with an introduction by Michael Taft. Publications of Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive, Bibliographical and Special Series, No. 1 (St. John's, Newfoundland, 1975) xxx + 102 pp. no price given.

Country and Folk Music discography, which has long been somewhat of a "closet science", seems, at last, to have achieved respectability. Discographers of the Carter Family (compiled by Alec Davidson, in *The Carter Family*, Old Time Music Booklet No. 1, London, 1973) and Bill Monroe and his Blue Grass Boys (compiled by Neil V. Rosenberg, Country Music Foundation Press, Nashville, 1974), as well as several numbers of the JEMF Special Series, are examples of fine, recently-published and readily-available works.

A Regional Discography of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1904-1972, offers a unique approach to the presentation of discographical material. As its title indicates, it is an attempt at documenting the published sound recordings of a particular geographical area, the purpose being "to list those recordings which have had an impact on a well-defined, culturally-cohesive region." (p. xxi) All genres of music, from traditional songs to opera (and spoken word recordings) are included. This type of holistic approach to the study of music within a particular region is intriguing, but has seldom been attempted. The most obvious drawback to this type of study is that the area under consideration must not only be host to sufficient musical activity to make such a study an interesting and significant indication of the processes of interaction between various types of music, but also must not contain so much activity that a study becomes impractical (one would hardly attempt a regional discography of California, or even of Los Angeles county). As Herbert Halpert points out in his preface (p. iv), Newfoundland would seem to be an ideal region to approach in this manner.

The compiler, Michael Taft, has divided the work into two sections, a list of those records made by native Newfoundlanders, followed by a less comprehensive list of Newfoundland songs recorded by non-Newfoundlanders (a "Newfoundland song" being defined as "any song which is either indigenous and peculiar to the island's traditional culture...or which has been composed by a native Newfoundlander". p. xxvii). In regard to the first section, Taft discusses the difference between recordings intended for local island consumption versus those aimed at a mainland market. (Unfortunately, he does not seem to indicate in the main body of discographical data which artists fall into which category.) He also differentiates between "private" and "commercial" records, the former being those produced in a "vanity-press" manner with the performer financing production,

and the latter being those financed by a record company. Private recordings of various sorts have apparently had a significant impact on the island's musical culture, with perhaps the most important being a recording of the famous "Squid-Jigging Ground", produced and performed by the song's composer, Arthur Scammell.

The second section, a list of Newfoundland songs recorded by outsiders is, as Taft states, "less detailed than the first one...[and] is meant to function merely as a check-list" (p. xxvi). This would seem to be a defensible approach, inasmuch as these recordings would have minimal influence on Newfoundland music. (They may, however, exert considerable influence on outsiders' conceptions of Newfoundland music.)

In general, Taft has presented his data in an easily accessible format. Both sections are arranged alphabetically by artist. He includes, when known, recording personnel, instrumentation, recording dates and locations, matrix numbers, titles, composer credits and release numbers. He also includes an LP numerical, and indexes of song titles and accompanists (this last for the first section only). My major objection to his arrangement, is that in order to show changes in the island's musical culture, the main body of information should have been presented chronologically. This, however, may not have been feasible, as in many cases exact recording dates seem to be missing.

Taft is well aware of what a regional discography can and cannot tell one about the sort of musical activity which is actually carried out in the area under study (pp. xxii-xxiv). Folklorists will be particularly interested to note that only one complete LP of traditional singing from Newfoundland has been issued, while the existence of at least four scholarly printed collections of songs, plus many unissued field recordings from the area would indicate a strong singing tradition. Perhaps a future volume in this series will cover unpublished recordings. Students and fans of American Country Music will be interested to see how this music has spread to Newfoundland, as is indicated by the number of songs of this type which have been recorded by Newfoundlanders.

The only other comment that I would make is that while Labrador is included in the title of the book, Taft seems to deal only with the island of Newfoundland. Perhaps there has been no recorded material from the Labrador section of Newfoundland Province.

On the whole, the work is well done and more intriguing than might originally be supposed. A laudable execution of an interesting concept.

-- Paul F. Wells
JEMF

DEEP SOUTH PIANO: THE STORY OF LITTLE BROTHER MONTGOMERY by Karl Gert zur Heide (London: Studio Vista, 1970). 112 pp.; photos, transcriptions, index. Available for 75p (plus 15p seaimail postage) from B. U. Books, 38a Sackville Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, U. K.

This is a useful little book in Paul Oliver's Blues Paperbacks series. Tracing the pre-World War 2 career of the well-known blues pianist Montgomer, zur Heide illuminates something of the musical interchange among deep South barrelhouse pianists that constituted an important tradition along the Mississippi and its tributaries. Since so much recent research has concentrated on guitarists, this volume is particularly welcome insofar as it attempts to redress the balance.

Its first section - slightly less than half the book -- is devoted to Montgomery and his musician-associates, tracing his movements on Louisiana, Mississippi, and in the Chicago area. There follows a lengthy "who's who" section providing brief biographical information on a number of the people mentioned in connection with Montgomery. Rounding out the book are zur Heide's transcriptions of 23 pre-World War 2 lyrics Montgomery recorded, a discography which carries through 1936, and a lengthy index of names (I estimate about 400).

Karl Gert zur Heide is an accomplished fieldworker, and a good writer. For the blues specialist, *Deep South Piano* is required reading; for the fan, it will provide much pleasure. In its virtues are its shortcomings, for, in emphasizing biography, it neglects musical, textual, and cultural analysis. And in a volume so crammed with facts, I find it incredible that there is no documentation: no references, no bibliography. While the sheer volume of references would doubtless have taken up the space of another book, a list of interviews, articles, and other sources of information should have been substituted for a few of the many photos. One final cavil: whoever decided to include the photo on page 34 should have his ears pulled. It shows Montgomery, fat and out of focus in his undershirt, while Sunnyland Slim's piano-playing arm takes up most of the foreground. The embarrassed (I hope) caption reads, simple, "Sunnyland Slim." But within its limitations, *Deep South Piano* makes a significant contribution to our knowledge of blues.

-- Jeff Titon
Tufts University, Boston, Mass.

MUSIC FOR PATRIOTS, POLITICIANS, AND PRESIDENTS, by Vera Brodsky Lawrence (NY: Macmillan Publ. Co., 1975), 480 pp., facsimile reproductions, index; \$35.

One can confidently expect the fervors of the approaching bicentennial celebration to generate many offerings, both written and recorded, attempting to integrate American history with American music. There will undoubtedly be some bad ones as well as some good ones; *Music for Patriots, Politicians and Presidents* happily falls in the latter category.

The now-flourishing use of musical material to illustrate social change and historical events seems to be a part of the general blossoming of interest in American popular culture of the last decade or so. There has been a veritable cornucopia on popular songs, comic books, western movies, dime novels, and other facets of popular culture, and music has received its share of attention. The phenomenon, however, is not an exclusively contemporary one: one of the first historians to use popular culture materials to supplement a history of the United States was Mark Sullivan, whose six-volume study, *Our Times*, (1927-1933) chronicled the nation's life through the first quarter of the twentieth century. But Sullivan's work was primarily a history; on the other hand, more recent studies such as Irwin Silber's *Songs America Voted By* (1971) and Philip S. Foner's *American Labor Songs of the Nineteenth Century* (1975) are primarily song collections buttressed by enough historical background to put the songs in proper perspective. Vera Brodsky Lawrence's recent book, subtitled "Harmonies and Discords of the First Hundred Years," is in the spirit of these latter works. But though I would not care to compare the quality of the scholarship, there can be no denying that Lawrence's book is far more of a real graphic arts delight -- a book for the coffee table, I would call it, were that characterization not suggestive of a certain amount of disdain.

Not only is the collection elegantly laid out, but it is a large one: over 650 songs are quoted and discussed between its covers. These are illustrated with over 150 sheet music covers and some 50 broadsides. The collection spans the century from 1764 to 1876, with, not surprisingly, the longest chapter (one fifth of the entire book, with over one half of all the sheet music covers) devoted to the Civil War years. Though the bulk of the songs deal with major events of national significance, such as wars and elections, there are a few delightful entries that concern less portentous social issues, such as women's rights ("The Bloomer's Complaint" and "I'll Be No Submissive Wife").

Written for a general audience, the book may irritate a few more academically oriented users because of the lack of footnotes or references to much of the commentary. On the aesthetic side, one can justly complain about the few illustrations that straddle the center of two facing pages; in such an expensive book, the editors should have found a better way (e.g., fold-out sheets) to display these large reproductions.

-- Norm Cohen

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES

Several important books on the subject of country music have recently been made available in paperback editions. These include: Bill C. Malone's *Country Music U. S. A.: A Fifty-Year History*---still the best single volume history of country music available; Irwin Stambler and Grelun Landon's *Encyclopedia of Folk, Country and Western Music*; Roger M. Williams' *Sing a Sad Song: The Life of Hank Williams*; and Paul Hemphill's *The Nashville Sound*. The Williams book is not a photographic reprint, but seems to have been completely reset; furthermore, the photo section at the center of the book has been changed.

Pickin', 2:9 (Oct. 1975) includes "On the Cuttin' Edge...with Eddie Adcock," an interview by Tom Henderson (pp 4-12); and "Pioneers of the Grand Ole Opry: Deford Bailey, Harmonica Wizard," by Charles Wolfe (pp 18-19). 2:10 (Nov. 1975) includes an interview with Keith Whitley by K. L. Stanton (pp 4-9); an interview with Richard Greene by Paul F. Wells (pp 10-18); and an article on Raymond Fairchild, by Frank Fletcher (pp 20-22). 2:11 (Dec. 1975) features "Those Incredible Youngsters: Jimmy Henley, Jimmy Gyles, and Mark O'Connor," by Mike Carpenter (pp 4-12); and "Gene Autry: The Pre-'Singing Cowboy' Years," by Douglas B. Green (pp 22-24).

Bluegrass Unlimited, 10:5 (Nov. 1975) features "J. E. and Wade Mainer," by Ivan M. Tribe and John W. Morris (pp 12-21). 10:6 (Dec. 1975) includes "Bill Keith," by Tony Trischka (pp 12-15). 10:7 (Jan. 1976) has "The McPeak Brothers," by Chet Rhodes (pp 8-10).

Mid-South Folklore, 3:3 (Winter 1975), is a special issue dedicated to Ozark folklorist Vance Randolph. Of interest from the folk music perspective is Judith McCulloh's "Uncle Absie Morrison's Historical Tunes," containing tune transcriptions to sixteen fiddle pieces played by Morrison, together with his own comments on the pieces and an introductory note. Morrison and his twin brother recorded two numbers for RCA Victor in 1930 (both reissued on County 518); he was also recorded by Alan Lomax in 1959 (selections on Prestige International 25003 and 25006).

Popular Music Periodicals Index: 1973 compiled by Dean Tudor and Nancy Tudor (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1974). xvi + 338 pp., \$11.50. This is the first volume in what promises to be a new series, companion to the *Annual Index to Popular Music Record Reviews* (see immediately following). Forty-seven periodicals for 1973 were indexed (presumably completely); nineteen others were indexed selectively. The rubric of "popular music" is construed broadly enough to include such diverse publications as *Bluegrass Unlimited*, *Blues Unlimited*, *Coda*, *Crawdaddy*, *Guitar Player*, *High Fidelity*, *JEMFQ*, *Ethnomusicology*, *Rolling Stone*, *Sing Out*, and *Zoo World*. All the material is indexed both by subject and by author.

Annual Index to Popular Music Record Reviews: 1973, by Andrew D. Armitage and Dean Tudor (Metuchen, N. J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1974), xxi + 681 pp., \$20.00. This index is divided into thirteen sections: rock, mood-pop, country, old time and bluegrass, folk, ethnic, jazz, blues, rhythm and blues, religion, stage and film, band, and humor. Within each section, albums are arranged alphabetically by artist. For each album, artist, title, label and release number, and information on any tape configurations, are given. Following this information are listed all reviews that appeared in 1973 in any of the 60 journals indexed. A total of over 5900 albums are indexed, with nearly 14,000 individual reviews cited. Each review cited is marked with an estimate of the reviewer's evaluation on a numerical scale of 0 to 5. In the section on old time and bluegrass, 236 albums were reviewed. The division into musical genres poses some problems and may bewilder some users. For example, the section on "folk" includes revivalist citybillies such as Joan Baez, John Fahey, and Leo Kottke, along with Doc Watson, Aunt Molly Jackson, and Michael Coleman. The "ethnic" section, designed to include non-English language traditional folk music, includes many releases that should be considered pop rather than folk.

Social Forces, 53:3 (March 1975) includes "From Region to Class, The Changing Locus of Country Music: A Test of the Massification Hypothesis," by Richard A. Petersen and Paul Di Maggio. Authors' abstract: "The regionalization, commercialization, and subsequent diffusion of country music are examined in terms of the massification hypothesis [i.e., by hypothesis that mass culture is breaking down the old barriers of class and tradition, producing an homogeneous culture]. Each of the data sets examined suggests that the massification theorists were right in observing that the old patterns of cultural diversity along ethnic, regional, and even class lines are being destroyed or buried. But they have erred in their prediction of ever-increasing cultural homogeneity. While country music is increasingly embraced by mid-life, working and lower-middle class whites irrespective of regional origin, "easy listening" music is the preferred music in the same segment of the population. These data bring into question the assumption that social classes have distinct cultures and lead to the conjecture that these musical styles may represent convenient indicators of emerging culture classes."

The American Dance Band Discography: 1917-1942, 2 vols, by Brian Rust (New Rochelle, N. Y.: Arlington House, 1976). 2066 pp (paginated continuously through the two volumes); \$35.00 the set. Includes discographies of almost 2400 white dance bands (Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller are omitted because they were covered thoroughly in other recent publications).

MEETINGS

The Tennessee Folklore Society held its 41st annual meeting Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at Austin Peay State University at Clarksville, Tennessee. Papers included "Ballad of the Braswell Boys: A Putnam County Incident" by Jesse D. Hudelston, Tennessee Tech University; the author traced the origin and dissemination of a long (28 stanzas) event ballad about an 1875 murder, and the way in which the event remains in folk consciousness of the area. Robert S. Whitman (Peabody College) presented "The Recorded Folksong as Text and Textbook", in which he discussed the practical problems of dealing with the folk song in a classroom, and Graham S. Kash (Tennessee Tech.) presented a study of mid-Tennessee dulcimer maker John Maxwell. A 12-minute film, "Gandy Dancers," was shown by Dr. Thomas Burton (East Tennessee State University); the film, recently completed by Burton and Jack Schrader under grants from the NEA, Tennessee Arts Commission, and Appalachian Consortium, documented the music and life of white and black railroad section crews of the Johnson City, Tenn. and Dante, Va. areas. Music was provided by the Rain-Crow Countryside Band from French Lick, Indiana.

-- Charles K. Wolfe
Middle Tenn. State University, Murfreesboro, Tenn.

RECORD REVIEWS

With this issue of JEMFQ we begin the policy of reviewing sound recordings. Because of the great quantity of albums being issued, in contrast to our very limited available space, we are confining the scope of these reviews to recordings of historical significance or otherwise of particular interest - especially insofar as they concern the commercial folk traditions that are the principal focus of the JEMF's activities. Packages that are distinguished by their usefulness for educational or academic purposes will be given particular attention. Unless signed otherwise, all reviews are written by the Editor.

THE BLUE RIDGE HIGHBALLERS (County 407). Reissue of 12 selections of old-time stringband dance music originally made for Columbia in 1926. Titles: *Darling Child, Going Down to Lynchburg Town, Fourteen Days in Georgia, Sandy River Belle, Flop Eared Mule, Skidd More, Darneo, Soldier's Joy, Wish to the Lord I Had Never Been Born, Round Town Girls, Under the Double Eagle, Green Mountain Polka.*

The Blue Ridge Highballers were a popular dance band organized in the mid-1920s by Franklin County, Va., fiddler, Charley W. La Prade (1888-1958), who appeared at square dances, fiddlers' conventions, and local theaters. La Prade recorded twice: one session in 1926 and a second in 1927 for Paramount. On the 1926 session he was accompanied by guitarist Lonnie Griffith and banjo-player Arthur Wells. Luther B. Clarke, a music store proprietor in Danville who helped arrange the recording session, sang three vocals (including *Wish to the Lord I Had Never Been Born*); the other selections are all instrumentals. La Prade was a skilled fiddler (with some formal violin training) who led his band at a sprightly clip; the other instruments provide only rhythmic back-up. Most of the tunes are familiar numbers; *Darneo* is basically "Sail Away Ladies;" "Green Mountain Polka" is better known as "Richmond (Cotillion or Polka);" "Lynchburg" seems to be a medley of several familiar strains. Clarke's vocal is a local song referring to tobacco farm co-op difficulties of the period. C. Kinney Rorrer provides good biographical liner notes based, apparently, on his own researches.

FIDDLELING DOC ROBERTS: Classic Fiddle Tunes Recorded During The Golden Age (Davis Unlimited DU-33015). Fourteen selections recorded in 1927-33 for Starr Reno Company and American Recording Corporation by Doc Roberts, fiddle; Asa Martin, guitar; and (on 6 tracks) James Roberts, guitar. Titles: *Brick Yard Joe, New Money, Billy in the Lowground, Farewell Waltz, Did You Ever See the Devil, Uncle Joe?, Cumberland Blues, Black Eyed Susie, Old Buzzard, Sally Ann, I Don't Love Nobody, Run Smoke Run, Wednesday Night Waltz, Cripple Creek, Waynesboro.*

Phil (Doc) Roberts, born in 1897 in Madison County, Kentucky, was an outstanding old-time fiddler of the 1920s whose bluesy technique was almost unique among recording artists of the period ("Cumberland Blues" is an outstanding example, not only of his fiddling, but also of his partners' back-up artistry). Though Roberts also fiddled back-up behind several vocalists, this LP samples only his fiddle instrumentals. Some of the tunes are quite rare (e.g., "New Money" and "Farewell Waltz"); in some instances (e.g., "Cripple Creek"), Roberts turns out delightful and unusual variations of well-known standards. Unfortunately, Roberts' fine musicianship is not heard to best advantage because of the poor technical quality of the original 78s and/or the remastering job. Nevertheless, this is a useful LP if for no other reason than that -- surprisingly -- so little of Martin and Roberts' work has been previously reissued. Liner notes by Ivan M. Tribe provide a biographical sketch and tune identifications.

DR. GINGER BLUE: Asa Martin & the Cumberland Rangers (Rounder Records 0034). Sixteen instrumentals and vocals by traditional musicians, recorded in Irvine, Kentucky, 1972-73; includes 20-page booklet of biographies and annotations. Titles: *Lay Around the Kitchen 'Til the Cook Comes In, Dr. Ginger Blue, Rutherford's Reel, Going Back to Alabama, There's More Pretty Girls Than One, The Cat's Meow, The Rowan County Crew, Sweet Bunch of Daisies, Lost John, Two Old Freight Trains Side by Side (or Careless Love), I Tickled Her Under the Chin, There's No Place Like Home For the Married Man, Dreamy Georgiana Moon, The Death of Edward Hawkins, (I'm Leaving You) Sweet Florine, Jim Chapman Schottische.*

Asa Martin, born in 1900 in Clark County, Kentucky, was a very popular singer-guitarist in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s who recorded extensively with several other artists, most notably Fiddlin' Doc Roberts and James Roberts. In recent years, Martin has been playing with a new band, The Cumberland Rangers, including Jim Gaskins, fiddle; Grady "Buz" Brazeale, guitar, mandolin, autoharp; Gilbert

Thomas, mandolin; and Earl Barnes, guitar and vocal. Guitar and fiddle are the principal instruments. This album is an excellent sampling of the variegated fare that Martin had put on records in previous decades or worked into his repertoire more recently. The title song is a fine piece of medicine show monologue; "Rowan County Crew" and "The Death of Edward Hawkins" are local ballads, the latter recorded once in the 1920s but never released. Martin was never a great singer, and his guitar playing has lost some of its edge over the years, but on the whole the music is successful and quite enjoyable. The well-written brochure, extensively illustrated with vintage advertisements, photographs, and reproductions from songbooks, is characteristic of the fine work of the producers/annotators, Guthrie T. Meade and Mark Wilson.

200 YEARS OF AMERICAN HERITAGE IN SONG (CMH-1776). 100 selections on 5 lp discs by various performers, including Don Ange, Tommy Faile, Maggie Griffin, Erica Huckle, The Jones Brothers, and the Log Cabin Boys, Benny Martin, Dick & Jacquie Schuyler, Arthur Smith, Ralph Smith. Recorded in Arthur Smith Studios, Charlotte, North Carolina, 1975. Package includes 16-page brochure.

Through a mixture of songs and ballads either from or about various phases in American history, and social development this set attempts to summarize 200 years of life in this country. The ten sides are subtitled: The British Heritage; The Building of America; Westward Migration/Early Black Songs/Civil War; Civil War/The Cowboy; Badmen/Mountain Ballads and Dances; Railroads/Coal Mines; Turn of the Century/Early Hillbilly Records; The Great Depression; World War II/The Golden Years (of Country Music); The Milestone Songs. The performance styles vary from country to citybilly to bluegrass, and in most cases cannot be considered traditional renditions. The brochure notes by Norm Cohen attempt to place the 100 songs, ballads, and instrumentals, in the context of American history and the history of Country Music. The collection should be useful for classroom instruction in American history and civilization. (LP set costs \$9.95; also available on 8-Track Cartridges or Cassettes for \$12.95 per set. Write to Box 39439, Los Angeles, California 90039.)

SPADE COOLEY (Club of Spade 00102). Fourteen selections by western swing fiddler Spade Cooley and orchestra. Titles: *Willow Springs*, *Pony Tail Polka*, *Happy Hayride*, *Those Bonny Blue Bells*, *Santa Fe Express*, *Rockin' the Square Dance*, *Saturday Night Social*, *The Mockin' Bird is Listenin'*, *The Latin Leprechaun*, *Swingin' the Blue Danube*, *Skatin' on Thin Ice*, *Blue Jeans and Gingham*, *Gypsy Jive*, *Fidoodlin'*.

SPADE COOLEY (Club of Spade 00103). Twelve selections by Cooley and orchestra. Titles: *Arkansas Traveler*, *Hoedown*, *San Antonio Rose*, *Pan Handle Rag*, *Sugar Blues*, *I Can't Give You Anything But Love*, *Dill Pickle Rag*, *Blue Skies*, *Spadella*, *In the Mood*, *Que Sera Sera*, *The Lost Indian*: Vocals on underlined titles.

Donald C. "Spade" Cooley (1910-1969), son of an old-time Oklahoma fiddler, was a major figure in Southern California during the 1940s, where he was leader of one of the most popular western/pop dance bands in the area. His music was basically western/western swing, though more heavily influenced by popular dance band music than other western bands, and with significantly less blues influence. According to the brief liner notes, #00102 was recorded shortly before Cooley's sudden death from a heart attack with an album in mind. Album #00103, from Cooley's own private collection, seems to be live recordings from TV or stage performances. Despite Cooley's roots, there is not much on these albums of interest to the listener seeking traditional music; tunes are fully orchestrated, with multiple unison fiddles. Even familiar traditional titles such as "Dill Pickle Rag" and "Lost Indian" are far removed from their origins. Accordingly, these albums will appeal exclusively to western music fans. (Albums are available for \$6.99 for the set; \$8.99 for tape version. Write to Box 1771, Studio City, California 91604.)

HULA BLUES (Rounder 1012). Reissue of 16 selections, mostly recorded in 1920s and 1930s, of Hawaiian style steel guitar music. Titles and artists: *Hula Blues*, *Farewell Blues*, *Hawaiian March*, *Train Song* (Sol Hoopii); *Melani Anu Ka Makani*, (Frank Ferera); *Song of the Range*, *Chimes* (Jim and Bob, the Genial Hawaiians); *Kauai Kahio* (Biltmore Orchestra); *Jake Bottle Blues* (Lemuel Turner); *The Cat's Whiskers* (Pat Patterson and his Champion Rep Riders); *Blues of the Guitar* (Andy Sanella); *Honolulu Stomp* (Hawaiian Serenaders); *Twelfth St. Rag* (Sol Hoopi with O. T. Coffin); *Hilo March*, *Kalima Waltz*, *Twilight Echoes* (Roy Smeck).

These performances, chosen and annotated by Robert F. Gear, were selected to illustrate pre-World War II instrumental steel guitar music. Gear notes the great impact Hawaiian music made in the United States around the time of the first World War, to the extent that almost every restaurant or hotel featured an Hawaiian dance band. Gear's notes sketch the beginnings of the steel guitar style in Hawaii, its introduction to the United States, and its influence on both hillbilly and blues musicians. Biographical notes on Sol Hoopii (and a few brief remarks about some of the other musicians) are given.

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11. "From Sound to Style: The Emergence of Bluegrass," by Neil V. Rosenberg. From *Journal of American Folklore*, 80 (1967).
12. "The Technique of Variation in an American Fiddle Tune," by Linda C. Burman (Hall). From *Ethnomusicology*, 12 (1968).
13. "Great Grandma," by John I. White. From *Western Folklore*, 27 (1968), and "A Ballad in Search of It's Author," by John I. White. From *Western American Literature*, 2 (1967).
14. "Negro Music: Urban Renewal," by John F. Szwed. From *Our Living Traditions: An Introduction to American Folklore*, New York, Basic Books (1968).
15. "Railroad Folksongs on Record--A Survey," by Norm Cohen. From *New York Folklore Quarterly*, 26 (1970).
16. "Country-Western Music and the Urban Hillbilly," by D. K. Wilgus. From *Journal of American Folklore*, 83 (1970).
- 17-25. Under the title "Commercially Disseminated Folk Music: Sources and Resources," the July 1971 issue of *Western Folklore* included 9 articles by D. K. Wilgus, Eugene Earle, Norm Cohen, Archie Green, Joseph Hickerson, Guthrie T. Meade, Jr., and Bill Malone. Available bound as a set only. (\$1.00 to *Friends*; \$2.00 to all others.)
26. "Hear Those Beautiful Sacred Tunes," by Archie Green. From *1970 Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*.
27. "Some Problems with Musical Public-domain Materials under United States Copyright Law as Illustrated Mainly by the Recent Folk-Song Revival," by O. Wayne Coon. From *Copyright Law Symposium (Number Nineteen)*, New York, Columbia University Press (1971).
28. "The Repertory and Style of a Country Singer: Johnny Cash," by Frederick E. Danker. From *Journal of American Folklore*, 85 (1972).
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30. "Robert W. Gordon and the Second Wreck of 'Old 97'," by Norm Cohen. From *Journal of American Folklore*, 87 (1974).
31. "Keep on the Sunny Side of Life: Pattern and Religious Expression in Bluegrass Gospel Music," by Howard Wight Marshall. From *New York Folklore Quarterly*, 30 (1974).
32. "Southern American Folk Fiddle Styles," by Linda Burman-Hall. From *Ethnomusicology*, 19 (1975).
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JEMF QUARTERLY

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Winter 1975

Number 40

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